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# New-Build Gentrification in Chittagong, Bangladesh: A Case Study from Asian Gentrification Perspective

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Abstract</b></p> <p>This article explores mode of gentrification in Bangladesh with specific focus on new-build gentrification in Chittagong city, from the perspective of gentrification in Asian cities. This research is the opening work in this study area as well in Bangladesh, where an overall image of gentrification has been depicted. Gentrification has been one of the long-debated issues of urban studies, though, most of these debates have been taken place regarding Anglo-American cities. While emerging literature indicates a 'planetary gentrification', most of them focused on Anglo-American cities, a very few researches have been conducted on many urban centers all over Asia, Africa, Latin America, and even in Eastern Europe. In case of southern gentrification, especially in Asian cities, new-build gentrification is very significant. Thus, the case study of this article is based on Bangladesh, and more specifically, a newly build luxurious area known as Khulshi Residential area of Chittagong metropolitan city. However, this work has also brought the issues being discussed in classical gentrification literature.</p> <p>This research used explorative studies and qualitative methods mainly. Additionally, quantitative analysis has also been used in minor extent. Qualitative part of the research was based on visual analysis, questionnaire survey and in-depth interview where, quantitative part includes the analysis of census and survey data, and graphical presentation of those data.</p> <p>From the analysis, it is strongly evident that the case study area is facing the gentrification process rapidly, where most of the notions of it indicate that new-build gentrification is prominent. Both state and private sector act jointly in gentrification process. State lay the foundation through road construction, provision of better service and other infrastructure and through the gentrification friendly policy. After that, private actors utilize those facilities and push the process further. The case study shows certain common characteristics of the main stream gentrification theory, which include intrusion of a new social class with higher economic power, an influx of investment in the real estate and luxury service sector in the selected area, the production of exclusive places for wealthy population in those areas, and so forth. Compared with other Asian cities, regional similarities - for instance, state-led gentrification and eviction, rapid privatization, use of public property for private use, highly influenced public policy by social elite, etc. are also visible. Additionally, Socio-spatial inequality is highly manifested in the gentrified area. Thus, certain localized characteristics are also evident. Both displacement and replacement are evident in the case study; however, displacement</p>			

and eviction are more prominent than replacement. Economic capability is crucial to be the gentrifier than socio-demographic characteristics (for instance, age, family structure, social class, education etc.). Loss of public places and conversion of it into private use to benefit certain wealthy community is visible in the area. Along with that, segregation, in terms of social and economic, is the common feature with an emergence of gated community is in the area.

However, since this research is the initial study in Bangladesh perspective, further in-depth study is required.

Keywords

Gentrification, New-Build Gentrification, Southern Perspective, Bangladesh, Chittagong, Khulshi

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# 1. Introduction

Gentrification is among the key issues in recent urban literature. From the inception in the 60s, it is one of the most debatable issues among urban researchers over the last four decades.

The term “gentrification” was first introduced by sociologist Ruth Glass in 1960. Based on her observation from Inner London, she proposed the term for the replacement of working class quarter by upper and middle classes. After this process of ‘gentrification’ takes place, it develops quickly up until all or most of the original working-class residents have been displaced and the entire atmosphere of the district is being transformed.

In case of western cities, different modes of gentrification, for example, new-build gentrification (Davidson and Lees- 2005), rural gentrification (Philips, 1993), super-gentrification (Lees, 2003), hybrid gentrification and downward raiding (Lemanski,2014) and other types are visible, along with classical gentrification-which took place in central areas of the city.

Among other kinds, new-build gentrification is the latest type of gentrification which is being evident in more frequently and with significant influence. From the beginning of this type, there has been critical academic debate appearing from different academics. The major focus of this debate is in the mode of gentrification, and its distinguished characteristics. Where, the conceptualization and the explanation of classical gentrification were based on Anglo-American cities, this new form of gentrification is phenomenal globally, this is what Smith (2002) illustrated gentrification as major urban strategy.

Another perspective in urban geography coming from the comparative urban scholar as they have argued that the large number of cities have been underrepresented in the theory making process in the field of urban geography. In their argument, most of the urban theories were being formulated on the experience of limited numbers of northern cities, in Western Europe and North America. Outside these regions, a large portion of cities do not have any representation and focus in urban studies.

Third, from the experience of recent studies on Asian cities regarding gentrification, it is evident that new-build gentrification is the most significant incident in this region. So, it is highly probable that the case study, a portion of the city of Chittagong, Bangladesh, facing similar kind of process.

## 1.1 Significance of this Study:

No prior research has been found regarding gentrification in Bangladesh from literature review. This research is the initial work on this issue in Bangladesh context.

From literature on southern gentrification, it is seen that research on ‘gentrification’ is almost absent. It has started recently, when Loretta lees (2007) has called for comparative urbanism. Even in the case of northern cities, scholars argued that the term ‘gentrification’ become absent in many cases. Smith (1996) argued that

gentrification become a dirty word in academic literature. In many cases, it is sugarcoated as ‘urban redevelopment’, ‘urban renaissance’, ‘urban regeneration’ etc.

Since southern gentrification has started very recently, academic work on it is still very few- although it is argued as new urban strategy (Smith, 2002) or planetary gentrification (Lees, Shin, Morales – 2016). Thus, more academic research is much needed in every corner of the world for better conceptualization of this process. This research stems from that ground.

## **1.2 Reason for Choosing Khulshi R/A as Case Study and Its Relevance to Current Research**

The case study of this research is based on Khulshi Residential Area (cited as Khulshi RA) and its adjacent areas. It is a metropolitan Thana (smaller administrative unit after the district) within Chittagong City Corporation. Khulshi RA is the most luxurious, expensive and elite zone of Chittagong. Though this area is not much older in comparison with other parts of the city, this area is growing faster with its distinctive outlook. It's similar urbanization type can only be found in Gulshan area of Dhaka- the major diplomatic and elite zone in the country since the independence. Apart from the very luxurious and expensive nature of Khulshi, its adjacent areas show very sharp contrast. This contrast is visible in terms of housing type, population structure, literacy rate, sanitation and other criteria.

According to the census data on greater Khulshi Thana, part of ward no 8 (current case study area) has the lowest population but highest education rate, 71.5%. Other wards- 9, 13 and 14, have the education rate below 60 % but population near to double compared with ward 8 (part), (BBS, 2011). So, it is expected that Khulshi RA contributed largely to that education percentage but with a lower population. From that contrasting nature mentioned above, it is hypothesized that this area is going through the gentrification process.

## **1.3 Research Question**

The main objective of this research is to have holistic understanding about the mode of gentrification in Bangladesh, with particular focus in Khulshi Residential Area in the city of Chittagong. The prime focus is on Newbuild gentrification, though, general modes and characteristics of gentrification has also been addressed regarding particular context.

Based on literature on new-build gentrification (Davidson and Lees, 2005, 2010) and other, following issues are addressed in the research primarily-

1. The reinvestment of capital in Khulshi residential area
2. The social upgrading or replacement of the locality or local socio-economic profile, by incoming of high-income groups
3. Physical changes in landscape in a comparative perspective

#### 4. The direct or indirect displacement of working-class and low-income people

These four basic elements of gentrification will be explored and reflected in this study. Additionally, from the existing literature related to gentrification, certain notions are common and frequent. For example, privatization of public space, new-build urbanization, beautification and eviction are some of them. So, this research will focus on these issues from an explorative perspective.



*Image 1-1: Khulshi RA (left) and Adjacent areas (right)*

Source: google street view-2017

#### 1.4 Limitation of the Study

Data unavailability is one of the major encounters appeared in this research. From reviewed literatures in the case study, Bangladesh, no prior research on gentrification was found out. This process, gentrification, is not even addressed in any research work regarding Bangladesh. In this regard, this research can be said as the initial study on it. Additionally, no official data of socio-economic profile or other relevant issues of the study area has been found out. To overcome this, selective method has been used to identify selective issue. For example, the questionnaire method has been conducted to evaluate socio-economic situation in the area. To detect the landscape change and cultural identity of the class belongs to the area, visual analysis is used. These methods provided a general idea of the target issue, yet, has risk of lower representation because of small sample size.

Since it is an independent work and a part of the master's thesis, there remains significant limitations in conducting in-depth study. The limitations are in terms of time, scope, resource and funding. The whole research is self-funded-which primarily limited the volume of field study and detail study.

## **2 Literature Review; Theories, Debates and Issues on Gentrification**

The term “gentrification” was first coined by sociologist Ruth Glass in 1960. Experience from inner London, she defined the term as - “One by one, many of the working-class quarters of London have been invaded by the middle-classes—upper and lower. Shabby, modest mews and cottages—two rooms up and two down—have been taken over, when their leases have expired, and have become elegant, expensive residences.... Once this process of 'gentrification' starts in a district it goes on rapidly until all or most of the original working-class occupiers are displaced and the whole social character of the district is changed" (Glass 1960).

In Glass's definition, it is a process of displacement of working-class residents in central city areas by more affluent social classes. On the contrary, it is the physical transformation of those areas which includes the conversion of built forms. These build forms comprised with heritage value and influenced by the elite from high cultural and economic class.

That was the starting point of gentrification study. In the outset, this process has taken place in post-industrial London in the 1960s, where the “new middle class” purchasing up older and often historic individual housing units and reproducing them for their own use. This process increasing up the property values as well as replacing out the previous, typically lower income working-class populations (Lambert and Boddy, 2002).

In classical view, gentrification starts with the disinvestment in the central city neighborhood. This makes decline of neighborhood quality by what wealthy people migrated out from the central areas. After the declining of urban areas because of disinvestment, it paves the way for potential “rent gap” (Smith 1986). When the rent gap gets large enough, gentrification may occur since it creates sufficient opportunity to make a profit through redevelopment (Smith 1996, 68). This led to a significant change in the appearance of the area with new building and typically more developed locality.

This concept has later been expanded beyond the small-scale residential rehabilitation. Clark (2005) illustrated a detail definition of gentrification which comprises the alteration in the population of landowners with a high socio-economic status than the previous users, which subsequently make change in the built environment through a reinvestment in fixed capital.

With physical changes, social changes also occur that contribute to gentrification, particularly with the movement of newcomers and more affluent middle class. People belong to “creative class” introduced by Richard Florida or new class proposed by David Ley (1996) - which includes young professionals, artists and others, have been drawn to the area. This people are often those without children replaces old families with more children. This class wants to live closer to their jobs and always look for easy access to cultural venues, entertainments, historic architecture and other urban services.

Freeman (2009) defined Gentrification, a process of invading by the more affluent people in relatively poor neighborhoods. Similar definition was given by The US Department of Housing and Urban Development, where gentrification is “the process by which a neighborhood occupied by lower-income households undergoes revitalization or reinvestment through the arrival of upper-income households”, (US Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1979, p. 4). Additionally, Hammel and Wyly defined gentrification as “the replacement of low income, inner-city working-class residents by middle- or upper- class households, either through the market for existing housing or demolition to make way for new upscale housing construction” (Hammel and Wyly, 1996, p. 250).

## **2.1 Process of Gentrification**

A detail explanation on how gentrification proceeds has provided by Malouthus (2011, page 36.). In his explanation, gentrification was first hypothesized in a period of metropolitan development and was credited to specific causal mechanisms on the supply and/or demand side. The processes of gentrification were related to the slowing of the rapid growth which was experienced by the industrial metropolises in the post-industrial era. Moreover, the increasing importance of inner changes following the rearrangement of their economic base and social structures. These processes directed to the consequent social redistribution of residential areas and building stock in and around city centers. In other words, the (re)annexation of areas occupied traditionally by working class sections and industrial activities by the upper-middle and middle class gentrifies.

Gentrification was powered by the profitability potential of building and real estate capital invested in inner-city areas what Neil Smith (1987), identified it as the rent gap- the difference between its actual and potential profitability. The process was also stimulated by the fast-growing housing demand for restored central locations from a relatively distinct socio-demographic group. The characteristics of this group are young single person, single parent and couples with no children households, and have a high and ‘creative’ occupational profiles. This profile and career patterns made it less attracted to the traditional nuclear families’ life standard in peripheral urban areas.

## **2.2 Actors of Gentrification**

Ley (1996) identified the ideal type of the gentrifier. The characteristics of them are generally- small and typically childless middle-class households, usually unmarried, mainly under 35 years of age, highly educated and employed greatly in the advanced services (professional, administrative, technical, and managerial occupations). In demand side theory, the members of this “New Middle Class” are measured as driving the demand side of the gentrification process.

Investors and real estate agents plays an active role in gentrification in Neil Smith’s (1984) rent gap theory. In it, they detect and exploit the rent gap in the inner city and make reinvestment for much higher profit. Role of local government and municipality play also key impact on gentrification in Smith’s argument.

Rerat at al. (2010) illustrated certain forms, actors and types of gentrification. The author has also classified certain groups as gentrifier, displaces; the role of private actors and local authorities behind gentrification process. In addition, Gotham (2005) proposed touristic gentrification, and Lees (2003) explained super gentrification.

## **2.3 Impact of Gentrification**

Atkinson and Bridge, (2005) discussed both positive and negative impacts of gentrification. From their discussion, positive aspect of gentrification is that it can help stabilizing the area through preventing the ongoing spiral of decline in areas. The change in occupancy from mostly renting to owner occupied also backs to the equilibrium of the area. The value of property strongly rises in the area affected whether unoccupied houses are converted into occupied, consequently falling the vacant housing rates in the area. Due to stabilization and upgradation, crime rate of the area tends to decrease, and this development subsequently reduces suburban sprawl. Noticeable physical restoration of property happens through an amalgamation of private investment and state patronage. An increase in local financial revenues occurs, with an encouragement and increased capability of additional development in the gentrified area. Additionally, the social mix observers an increase in the area.

In contrast to that, there remains strong negative impact as well. As the gentrification process develops, rent values increase and the original inhabitants of the area are displaced (ibid). Unsustainable speculative property price rises and affordable housing in the area becomes rare and ultimately disappear. Housing demand pressures can arise on adjacent areas after the displaced follow to move. Change in the local services occur whether the type of local services changes and the price increases. If displacement happens, displaced individuals may become homeless and secondary psychological impacts may ascend because of displacement. Increased of crime and antipathy arises within the community and conflict can occur between the original inhabitants and the middle class gentrifiers. The gentrified areas face under-occupancy and population loss. A

loss of social diversity occurs where shifting takes place from the socially disparate to rich ghettos (Atkinson and Bridge, 2005).

In case of New York City, the transformation of public spaces took place by street furniture and architectural style. Subsequently this contributes to “social filtering and exclusion of social groups formerly possessed those spaces”, (Zukin 1995).

## **2.4 Academic Debate on Impact of Gentrification**

Instead of large volume of research on gentrification, there are debates over the norms of it. The direction of gentrification research has been changed over time. The changing meaning of the term 'gentrification' can be seen in the work of several scholar such as; Hamnett (1991, 2009); Lees, (1994, 2000); Ley (1986); Slater, (2002, 2006, 2009); Slater et al (2004); Smith, (1996) etc. One school argues that gentrification is class based approach where higher professional group replace the lower class. But other scholar, for example- Tim Slater, claimed that gentrification creates displacement. Dealing with neighborhood impact of gentrification, Atkinson (2002) have done a systematic research and concluded that most of evidence on gentrification has identified negative impacts. Critical school argues gentrification creates displacement of lower class.

In first group, for instance, Freeman and Braconi (2004) argue that very little consistent sign has been produced about the magnitude of the problem of gentrification that could guide the planners, policy makers or community-based organization. In their research, is found that rather than rapid displacement, gentrification was linked with slower residential revenue among these households. In this school, Chris Hamnett have tried to figure out that gentrification is not merely displacement, but rather replacement of social class in the inner city. Chris Hamnett (2009) argued gentrification as essentially a class- based process whereby working-class or rundown areas of the city are transformed into middle-class residential areas often with attendant changes in commercial use. In his study over 40 years (1961 to 2001), London has observed its industrial structure which has inverted into financial and business services from manufacturing industry (8% now from about a third). This alteration in industrial employment structure has been comprised by a change in occupational class structure whereby the size and proportion of the skilled, semi- skilled and unskilled working class have dropped sharply whilst the size and proportion of the white-collar professional, managerial and technical middle classes have raised. The deterioration of the working class in London has partly happened for structural reasons (occupational change, retirement, death, move out for instance) rather than because of direct displacement. In a 2006 study, Newman and Wyly disputed the conclusion made by Freeman and Braconi that “displacement was not a problem in New York City”, but argued that the actual number of people displaced in New York City had been underestimated (Newman and Wyly, 2006).

In second group argued that gentrification involves displacement of lower income people. For instance, Bernt (2012) argued that gentrification is fundamentally a political process. Bernt and Holm (2009) argued that the



conceptualization of displacement is not simply an academic exercise, but has massive political implications. They show 'how theoretical differences in the definition of displacement have been taken up by policy-makers and used as justification for the withdrawal from 'welfarist' politics of market intervention to be replaced by advisory services to individual tenants'. They criticized that social scientists are partially accountable for this change and they demand for more critical involvement of scholars into public debates and a stronger plan of policy initiative. In addition, critical scholar, like Tom Slater (2006, 2009) criticized the researcher for ignoring displacement from gentrification study. Some scholars have concerned that gentrification, by transferring low-income minorities would lead to greater spatial segregation and more homogeneous localities and subsequently will lead to the DE concentration of poverty or greater social mixing (Rose, 2004). But Freeman (2009) suggested that in the neighborhood level, gentrification does not reduce diversity in the US.

In a systematic review, Rowland Atkinson (2001) studied whether 'gentrification helped or harmed urban neighborhoods' by Evaluating 114 books, papers and other literature on gentrification. He claimed that there remained numerous costs to gentrification than benefits. Costs are, for instance; displacement, community conflict, racial tension and landlord harassment- which were supported up by evidence. On the other hand, positive impacts such as increased tax revenues and social mixing were rarely found, and there was no concrete indication supportive to those prerogatives (Atkinson, 2001).

Lemanski (2014) argued another perspective than gentrification which is known as downward raiding. He claimed that while gentrification debates "largely reference the northern central city, downward raiding is reserved for the southern 'slum'". A different perspective of gentrification research is being also unearthed by Martin Phillips; what he coined as counter-urbanization and rural gentrification. He complained that most of the mainstream research of gentrification is focused on urban region, for what, according to him, it is needed to focus also on rural gentrification).

Hamnet (1991) proposed three conditions that need to be fulfilled by any gentrification theory are- 1. Existence of potential gentrifiers 2. Their demand to inner city living and 3. Existence of a rent gap.

## **2.5 Changing Phases of Gentrification (stages of gentrification)**

In a path breaking article, Hackworth and Smith (2001) have explained changing phase of gentrification in course of time from its inception. They have postulated three phases of gentrification. In brief, first phase was sporadic and isolated in limited number of North-eastern USA and Western Europe during 1968-73. After a short transition period, second phase started became took place in smaller, non-global cities. Within cities, these had been seen mainly in disinvested central city neighborhoods during 1978 to 1988. After this period, there was, again, a transition period where gentrification became slowed down due to economic recession. However, gentrification has returned with its full phase after 1993 where it got large-scale capital investment and state-led support. The process went beyond the city center and non-major regions had started this for the

first time. This phase is the starting point of this paper. Lees et al. (2008: 183) proposed a fourth wave of gentrification is in the making which associates the financialization of housing with the association of polarized urban policies.

## **2.6 New Build Gentrification (NBG)**

The new build Gentrification can be viewed as the third phase, or the post-recession gentrification, proposed by Hackworth and Smith (2001). This is characterized by certain factors, for example; heavy state intervention, diffusion of this process to more remote portion of urban landscape, influx of real estate industry from local to global market and a declining resistance against gentrification.

New build gentrification is very distinct from the initial or classic gentrification proposed by Glass (1964). While changes in the existing housing stock in the inner city got priority, development of new build establishments on urban non-residential sites got primary attention to newbuild development (Davidson and Lees, 2005, 2010). Philips (1993, 2004) has also proposed non-urban gentrification which is renamed as- rural gentrification.

While direct displacement has always been a critical battle ground for gentrification researcher, Lambert and Boody (2002) have argued that new-build areas in the vacant lands should not be seen as gentrification since it does not occur any direct displacement. In response to this argument, Davidson and Lees (2005) challenged this proposition and argued that new-build developments are also form of gentrification. Instead of using the terms like re-urbanization, re-residentialization, etc. they have argued this form as new-build gentrification.

## **2.7 Debates on NBG (against and for)**

There has been seen two side of argument regarding displacement induced by new-build gentrification. One group argued that new-build developments do not involve any displacement since it doesn't being restored in old housing, nor any replacement of social groups take place since it is being constructed on brown fields or vacant areas (Lambert and Boody, 2002; Bridge, 2001; Bridge; 2002).

However, second group strongly argued that new-build development as gentrification. They have argued that new-build developments comprise middle-class resettlement of central city, the making of a gentrified landscape and lower-income displacement from surrounding neighborhoods (Davidson and Lees, 2005, 2010; Doucet et al, 2011).

## **2.8 Gentrification in Comparative Perspective**

Robinson (2002) contented that urban theory is based primarily on the experience and histories of western cities. She urged for more broad studies where all cities can be represented in urban theory building process. Very recently numerous urban scholars called for comparative urbanism in recent papers, such as Robinson,

2004; Dear, 2005; Nijman, 2007a; Ward, 2008. They raise concerns about the realm within which urban geographers make comparisons.

The term “comparative urbanism” is defined by Nijman (2007a) as ‘the analytic procedure to find out what is true for all cities and what is true for specific city’.

In her seminal work, Loretta Lees (2012), called for comparative studies in gentrification research through merging traditional north-south divide. In her previous work, Lees (1994) focused on context-specific theorization regarding gentrification. In her work on “Progress in Human Geography”, Lees (2012) called for a progressive research program on the ‘geography of gentrification’. Portion of her argument was that the context had temporality been sidelined in both gentrification research and in urban policies that promoted gentrification. She argued that a ‘geography of gentrification’ is required to include the attention of both the spatial and the temporal dimensions of gentrification, in terms of international, international, and citywide comparisons with a reflection of the timing of processes (Lees 2012). Citing Nijman (2007), Lees (2000) also stressed on comparative urbanism as ‘a field of inquiry that seeks the systematic study of similarity and difference among cities or urban processes both through description and explanation’.

Lemanski (2014) argued that most of the critiques of urban theory is narrowly northern, mainly centered in Anglo-American perspective. He called for comparative urbanism- where experience of urbanism for all cities should be opened. Connecting gentrification in both London and Mumbai, Harris (2008) emphasize on more region-specific theorization regarding gentrification.

In addition, Smith (2001) argued that post-recession gentrification has become a global urban strategy. Since significant part of world has becoming urbanized and prone to accept urban lifestyle, Davidson and Lees (2005) argued that majority of third world cities and first world suburban and rural areas are facing gentrification.

### **2.8.1 Southern Gentrification**

Although gentrification research is massive and very diverse when it comes to western perspective, research focused on southern perspective is opposite to this notion in terms of volume and diversity. Most of the research do not dated back more than 10 years. If it counts for Asian cities, it remains very narrow compared to Anglo-American context. However, from the existing literature found on Asian cities, certain characteristics can be found in common which are being discussed in following.

From the academic literature, the form of gentrification most commonly associated with East Asian and Southeast Asian cities is new-build gentrification, with the process to date evident in China (He, 2010), Japan

(Fujitsuka, 2005; Lutzeler, 2008), South Korea (Kyung and Kim, 2011; Shin, 2007), and Singapore (Wong, 2006).

From the following study, (for Shanghai, Wang, 2011; for Beijing, Shin, 2009b; for Tokyo, Lutzeler, 2008) it is evident that city governments have played the role of entrepreneurial promoter of inner-city redevelopment and gentrification. Studying Singapore's waterfront Central Business District, Wong (2006) argued that is a clear attempt to climb the hierarchy of competitive global cities. In the case, old houses were gradually removed in 1960-70s through a modernization programs, which were replaced by commercial enterprises later. Afterwards, with the desire to create an image of a globally attractive city and increase Singapore's competitiveness on the world stage, the CBD non-residential policy was revised, and clusters of condominiums had been built by the mid-1990s around waterfront areas.

From the review of recent literature and publications, Moore (2013) studied gentrification in Southeast and East Asia, and found that the term is commonly used as a tool to examine the large-scale expansion of new-build condominiums in inner-cities and the beautification of areas for tourism motivated by neoliberal principles.

McGregor (2008) illustrated that on the surface, the 'look' of the Global South of the cities suggest some of the key symptoms of gentrification that have been recognized in their counterparts in the Global North. For instance; the development of business centers, shopping malls, luxury hotels and high-rise residences, as well as the emergence of gated communities, and became available exclusively to those who can enjoy a globalized lifestyle, both economically and culturally. Choi (2014) argued the major trend of urban change in Asian cities is the privatization of space.

Among South-East Asia, Cambodia has been gone through enormous evictions. Citing Bristol (2007, p.15), Moore (2013) argued that motivated by development pressures, gentrification and beautification security of tenure continues to deteriorate in Phnom Penh and throughout the country and does so largely because of land grabs most of which are motivated by money.

Among various forms of gentrification, new-build gentrification has been a relatively frequent theme to be explored in East Asia (He, 2010; He and Wu, 2007; Lutzeler, 2008). Moore (2013) argued that the experiences are thus indicate that Asian cities are experiencing third-wave, or contemporary gentrification.

In contrast to the call for Southern perspective in recent time, however, Maloutas (2011) argued that gentrification is a concept highly reliant on on circumstantial causality and its generalized use will not eliminate its contextual attachment to the Anglo-American metropolis.

### **2.8.2 Gentrification in Context of Asian Cities**

In accordance with the logic of Smith (2002) that gentrification works as a global strategy which takes the circuit of capital in neoliberal world, growth of Asian cities provides a significant room for gentrification. In a study, David Satterthwaite (2005) has argued that ‘urban development in Asia is largely driven by the concentration of local, national and increasingly, international profit-seeking enterprises in and around particular urban centers. These cities’ may concentrate wealth both in terms of new investment and of high-income residents but there is no automatic process by which this contributes to the costs of needed infrastructure and services’.

Asian cities exhibit a model background in the conversion in everchanging the focus of gentrification research to the Global South. In case of China (He and Wu, 2005) or India (Harris, 2008), huge areas of the old inner city being converted to skyscrapers and sophisticated shopping malls and the continuous urban conversion of urban space takes place which is very similar to the face of gentrification in Western countries. However, there are several variations in such processes.

Tran (2015) illustrated four variations in Asian Cities compared to Anglo-American cities. The variations are for instance; large scale with rapid speed, conversion of working class to upmarket retailing and leisure hotspots rather than middle class areas, pivotal role of state and development of urban redevelopment project in brown and greenfield sites along with converted working-class areas.

Therefore, new-build gentrification shares the commonalities with other forms of gentrification in the altering of the place and class nature of the wider neighborhood (Davidson and Lees, 2010).

In addition, Asian coalition of Housing Rights (2005) has concluded that “globalization has led to direct foreign investment in Asian cities along with the development of a more aggressive business sector at the national level. This has resulted in the establishment of corporate sector industries, increased tourism, building of elite townships with foreign investment, gentrification of the historic core of many cities and a rapid increase in the middle classes. As a result, poor communities are being evicted from land that they occupy in or near the city centers, often without compensation, or are being relocated formally or informally to land on the city fringes far away from their place of work, education, recreation and from better health facilities. This process has meant an increase in land prices due to which the lower middle-income groups have been adversely affected and can no longer afford to purchase or rent a house in the formal land and housing market. They are relocating to the peri-urban areas”. Choi (2014) sees the privatization of space is trends of urban change in Asian cities.

Castells (1992) and Holliday (2000) postulated that liberal democracies in Asian cities were controlled or delayed in order to facilitate deployment of accessible resources for economic development and political gains for a long period. Economic prosperity through an export oriented economy and investment in fixed assets

was reinforced by the exercise of state power to coalesce and suppress oppositional voices. They argued that Asian countries unleash their own legitimacy through a particular blend of selective welfare programs and brutal suppression of civil societies (Castells, 1992; Holliday, 2000).

Unlike Euro-American cities, Asian cities exhibit significant variation from region to region. And it becomes more complicated when it comes gentrification; no extensive study has been conducted so far covering all Asian cities. So here, this paper will focus on regional basis - on which gentrification study has been conducted.

### **2.8.2.1 Gentrification in South-East Asia**

In East Asian and Southeast Asian cities, the common form of gentrification in the academic literature is new-build gentrification, which are evident in case of China (He, 2010), Japan (Fujitsuka, 2005; Lutzeler, 2008), South Korea (Kyung and Kim, 2011; Shin, 2007), and Singapore (Wong, 2006). This indicates that Asian cities are experiencing third-wave or contemporary gentrification- which was illustrated by Hackworth-Smith (2002).

In Philippines, under the dominance of landed elites and powerful political clans, the state has failed to amass a sufficient degree of power to address the economic problems faced by the majority of Filipinos, to the extent that it has become an ‘anti-developmental’ state (Choi, 2014). The review of urban change in Metro Manila demonstrates that the core feature of gentrification – the socio-spatial exclusion of the working class from their homes and communities because of land development for the more affluent class (ibid).

Moore (2013) studied gentrification in Southeast and East Asia through a review of recent literature and publications and to draw out from this contextual detail. The paper concluded that the term is commonly used as a tool to examine the large-scale development of new-build condominiums in inner-cities and the beautification of areas for tourism driven by neoliberal ideologies.

### **2.8.2.2 Gentrification in the Eastern Asia**

In the case of Shanghai, He (2010) explains how over the last 15 years’ extensive urban redevelopment has taken place in the city, resulting in the replacement of old houses by huge apartment blocks, mixed-use districts and green spaces. This has been instigated by the government under the rhetoric of “beautification”, “re-urbanization”, “urban renewal” and “urban revitalization”, with an absence of the term ‘gentrification’. He argues this is a case of gentrification as it has resulted in the direct displacement of thousands of indigenous low-income households, often to the peripheries of the city, to the benefit of higher income middle-class households who now occupy these spaces. In addition to using census data to show that the middle class has grown at the expense of the lower-classes.

Major Character of Asian Gentrification is that it is more extensive than European cities and direct or even forced displacement takes place. Eviction of informal settlers from the public lands is a common phenomenon in most of the Asian cities. The Asian Coalition for Housing Rights' (ACHR) Monitoring of Evictions in seven Asian countries (Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines) indicate that evictions are increasing dramatically. Between January to June of 2004 and 2005, consequently 334,593 and 2,084,388 people were evicted in the urban areas of these countries. The major reason for these evictions was the "beautification of the city". In most of the cases, people did not receive any compensation for the losses they incurred and where resettlement did take place it was 25 to 60 kilometers from the city Centre (Fernandes, 2006, Hasan, 2007). Moore (2013) argued that the experiences are thus indicate that Asian cities are experiencing third-wave, or contemporary, gentrification.

### **2.8.2.3 Gentrification in India**

Marc O'Bryan argued that India is supported by two economies, where most of the countries operate with one economy. One is formal, and another is informal economy. India's formal economy, for instance, business and corporate activities, operate under the regulations and supervision of the government. But informal economy acts as "parallel economy where the estimated annual output of Indian informal economy is around \$600 million to over \$1 billion, and is believed to be responsible for a large portion of India's annual economic growth, and provides an estimated 90 percent of all employment (O'Bryan, 2013). This simultaneous underground economy employs hundreds of millions of workers whose professions include shopkeepers, construction workers, taxi drivers, tailors, repairmen, and street vendors. However, this massive underground economy has developed without the support or encouragement of the government. O'Bryan has also argued that country's slums serve as a constant reminder of the government's failure to accommodate economic development in urban areas.

In spite of significant contribution of informal economy, it doesn't get positive attention from the policy regime. Indian policymakers fear that slums are weakening India's competitive position in the world. Plans for redevelopment of these slum areas are constantly being rolled around among these policymakers. Gentrification is one of the most common feature that characterizes most of the redevelopment plans. In order to redevelop the neighborhood into a more affluent environment, the process of gentrification often involves displacing current poor residents. To attain short-term gains that will come from increased tax revenues and increased economic productivity, government apparently seems is in favor of these plans. "Vision Mumbai" can be an example in this regard which was approved by the government in an attempt to "beautify" the city. The rhetoric behind the vision Mumbai is to transform the city of Mumbai into the "New Dubai of India" (ibid). Doshi (2015) concluded that Indian gentrification is politics of displacement and dispossession which is always faded by the rhetoric of development.

From the existing literature related to gentrification, certain notions are common and frequent. Privatization of public space, new-build urbanization, beautification and eviction are some of them. So, this research will focus on these issues from a critical perspective.

### **3 Background and Contextual Study of the research on Bangladesh, Capital Dhaka, and Chittagong**

#### **3.1 Urbanization in Bangladesh**

Bangladesh have a lower level of urbanization, 28.4 percent. But it has higher urbanization rate with large population of 42.7 million in 570 urban centers until 2011 (Islam, 2015). During 2001-2014 period, 14.1 million urban population has been added with the total which was highest since 1901.

During 1971-2011, the size of the country's population has increased double whether, the urban population has increased seven times (Nazem, 2015). From 5 million of urban population in 1971, it became 38 million in 2011 (BBS 2011). Small towns grew larger and the larger towns have developed into large towns, cities and megacities. The number of towns and cities were only 108 in 1971, whereas that number has increased to 532 in 2011 (ibid). Therefore, that enormous growth of urban population in the country and the expansion of urban areas have taken place largely in an unplanned manner (Islam 1999). Citing UN projection model Nazem (2014) claimed that it is estimated that by 2047, country's 50 percent of population will live in urban centers. In another estimation by the same authority, the tendencies in urbanization illustrate that the urban population in the country will rise accordingly; and by 2030 nearly half of the population of the country will live in urban areas. The urban population size will also be enormous; about 60 million.

Urbanization has significant role in Bangladesh Economy. 60 % of GDP is contributed by urbanization, which was only 25% during 1972-72. Positive contributions of urbanization are higher literacy rate, improvement of quality of education, better health indicators. But negative consequences that urbanization has contributed to are- physical environment degradation, social inequalities, persisting poverty, inadequate provision of basic utilities, educational and health services, and increasing incidence of crime and violence (Islam, 2013).

#### **3.2 Economic Structure of Bangladesh**

The Major changes has been taken place in economic structure in last two decades is dramatic shifting from agriculture to manufacturing and services (Nazem, 2015). Wherein 1980 the contributions of agriculture, industry and service sectors to GDP were individually 33.2%, 17.1%, and 49.7% (BBS, 2000), however, BBS



(2010) illustrated that the contribution of agriculture declined to 19.84% although industry boosted to 28.92% in 2008-09 (BBS, 2000, 2010 cited in Nazem, 2015).

The Economic Census of 2001-03 demonstrated that 37.4% of the country's industrial establishments and 48% of the total industrial employments were in the urban areas in 2003 (BBS, 2007). Where, urban areas covered only 7.2% of the total area of Bangladesh in areal context, the concentrations of industrial activities are very high in the large urban centers. Among the 532 urban centers of Bangladesh, only top 10 urbanized districts controlled 57.65% of industrial establishments and 67.39% of employments of the national urban total in 2003 (Hossain, 2011).

Bangladesh has a growing inequity in income level, pointed out by Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES, 2016) which is published by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS). The report pointed out that the rich-poor inequality in terms of wealth accumulation has been broadening in the country. Where the poorest five percent had 0.78 percent of the national income in their ownership in 2010, and now their share decreased into 0.23 percent. In contrast, the richest five percent, who had 24.61 percent of the national income six years before, now has a higher share 27.89 percent. The HIES (2016) report reflects that average monthly household income is Tk 15,945, around 200.160 Euro (The daily star, 2016).

Privatization has been the major policy shifting in governance after independence. Though nationalization took place after independence by the pro-liberation government, but it turns around after the fall of that government where military officials took over the country. In December 1975, a revised investment policy was launched where dismantling of nationalization took place with privatization of state enterprise was taken. Another big leap occurred in 1982 where New Industrial policy (NIP) was accepted under which 33 jute mills and 27 textile mills were given to the private owner (Humphrey, 1992).

### **3.3 Factors of Urban Growth**

Islam (2015) has pointed out 3 factors behind the rapid urban growth: first one is persistently high natural increase of native urban population. Second one is re-definition and territorial extension of urban areas from rural, and the third one is rural to urban population.

Two kinds of factors work behind urban growth in Bangladesh: urban pull factors and rural push factors. Urban pull factor comprised with employment opportunities due to free market economy and globalization. On the other hand, factors like increased population pressure, surplus labor force, rural poverty and climate change induced environmental disaster etc. influence out migration from rural areas (ibid). The combination of these two factors influence primarily on rural-urban migration.

Rural-urban migration is one of the key factors in expansion of urban growth in Bangladesh. From the beginning of Bangladesh census (1974) to the last census in 2011, urban population has increased by 6.8 times

higher whether rural population has increased only 1.7 times (BBS, 2011). The exponential growth rate of urban vs rural population is 5.18 to 1.36 (BBS, 1974-2011). This trend implies the significant growth of urban population and strengthen the notion of rural-urban migration. In case of Dhaka, the capital and dominant city of Bangladesh, migration is the dominant factor which contributes more than 60% of population.

### **3.4 Management of Urban Areas**

In past two decades, Bangladesh has been following western-style democratic system in national governance as well as in local governance. Though, urbanization of Bangladesh has become a very strong political, economic, social and cultural force, however, the improvement of quality of governance is yet to achieve.

The Urban areas are mainly comprised of city corporation or municipalities. Municipality or City corporation is the function of a complex combination of many organization ranging from government, autonomous, semi-government, as well as private sector, civil society, community and nowadays increasingly development partners and international agencies. Each of them is composed of many wards. For example, Dhaka has total 93 wards in two newly separated city corporations: Dhaka North and Dhaka South city corporation, with 36 and 57 wards respectively. Chittagong city corporation has 41 wards in total (CDA, 2017).

Local urban governance suffers from inadequate power and autonomy and financial capacity. In terms of political significance, the mayors of each major cities enjoy more political influence on government than any parliament member. Level of participation is also not satisfactory. But only in case of Dhaka, civil society and professional bodies have some degree of participation in planning process. Level of participation in urban planning is getting considerably lower when it goes to smaller units (Islam, 2013).

Lacking in local governance power is visible where the wards do not enjoy any substantial financial power (Islam, 2013). Urban local bodies are significantly weak in financial strength. Most of the bodies cannot raise enough property or holding tax and are unable of innovating new sources of earning. In Pourashava (municipal corporations in the metropolitan areas, not including the cities with city corporations) plans are prepared under central government agencies; for instance, the Urban Development directorates or Local Government Engineering Department (LGED). Though it is made obligatory for local participation in the Pourashava Act 2009 in terms of transparency and accountability of local authority (ibid).

### **3.5 Role of Private sector:**

Private sector has tremendous impact, especially real estate groups. For example, Detail Area Plan of 2009 was respected and passed by government but afterwards, subsequently yielded to pressure exerted by powerful real estate groups.

Investment in luxury residential development done by private land and housing development companies pushing lower income people out of the housing market in past two decades. The real estate companies, those are involved in land development, are very powerful, and are mostly uncontrollable and almost ungovernable. They have strong lobby in the parliament as well as connections in the administration.

Private sector real estate companies are also responsible of illegal hill cutting in Chittagong and Cox's bazar. Urban inequality is one of the key negative consequences in Bangladesh. Islam (2013) argued that the private corporate sector plays strong role in accentuating the inequality (Islam, 2013).

### **3.6 Transparency issue in Planning Process**

In terms of transparency and accountability of local authority, it is stressed to exhibit Citizens charter openly so that people are better aware of developments in their areas in Pourashava Act 2009. In planning process and its implementation, transparency lacks in most of the cases. Instead of civil administration, Army involvement is more being ensured. For example, Hatirjheel Lake Development project, Dhanmondi or Gulshan Lake development project (ibid).

### **3.7 Role of Civil Society Organization**

Previously Panchayats (neighborhood level social or community institutions) played very significant role in maintaining social order, especially in Dhaka. Now it doesn't seem stronger even in Dhaka where new build areas are more common. But only in case of Dhaka, civil society and professional bodies have some degree of participation in planning process. Level of participation in urban planning is getting considerably lower when it goes to smaller units.

### **3.8 Housing Situations in Bangladesh:**

The House Rent Control Act was enacted in 1991 which deals with all sorts of housing affairs in Bangladesh, especially, dispute settlements and fixing proper house rent. Another enacted law is City Corporation Taxation Rule, 1986, which encompasses matters related to calculating valuation of a house within City Corporation. However, those laws are not efficacious enough because of lack of timely amendment and lower public awareness (Uddin, 2017). Here, both the parties, owner and renter are not fully aware of their rights and obligations. Therefore, informal actions are being applied during disputes. Even in Chittagong, there are total of 1709 pending cases regarding house rent. Additionally, there are 35 eviction suits are also remains pending in Chittagong Court (Uddin, 2017). Majority of the city dwellers become hostages to house owners. In most of the occasions, any written agreement does not take place, but oral agreements only. In Addition, rent hike takes place arbitrarily.

### **3.9 Dhaka City: Focal Point of Urbanization of Bangladesh**

Though our case study is in Chittagong, however, to understand the urbanization pattern of Bangladesh it is needed to study capital city Dhaka primarily. Dhaka city represents major characteristics of urbanization pattern of Bangladesh.

After the independence of Bangladesh (1971), Dhaka expanded very dramatically. In 2011, less than one-third (42m) of the national population (150 m) lived in urban areas of the country (Nazem, 2015). Of them, 15.8 million lived in Dhaka region (which is about 35% of the national urban population). The rate of urban population growth in the country is over 3%, while that in the greater Dhaka region is 4.1% and the level of urbanization is 67% in the same region- the highest in Bangladesh (ibid). The urban sector in Bangladesh has been gaining importance continuously, in terms of GDP, employment generation, absorbing surplus rural population etc (ibid). Having only 28% of the population in its urban areas, the sector contributes about 60% to the country's GDP, of what most of the manufacturing industries (about half) are in Dhaka Metropolitan Area (DMA) which has an area of only 360 sq.km. Dhaka megacity alone shares more than half of the urban sector's contribution (Nazem, 2015).

World Bank (1999) indicated that 65 % of total employment in Dhaka city is in Informal sector. Some sectors like transport, 85 % are informal. Major informal sector for women is domestic. 81 % of urban poor are working in informal sector (GPRB-ADB, 1996).

Like other urban center of Bangladesh, Dhaka city has been going through severe shortage of housing. More than 70 % population has no access to land. The distribution of the land to the rest 30 % of population is also highly unequal. Public housing is very low, only few percentage has access to that. Here, 90 % of government employees are living in private housing, only 10 % is provided by government. (Stubbs and Clarke 1996).

### **3.10 Contexts of Gentrification in Bangladesh: Issues connected to gentrification Theories**

Though gentrification is evident globally, study of gentrification from Bangladesh perspective is completely new. For this reason, it is important to bring certain issues related to Dhaka city as well as Bangladesh which have connection to both classical and concurrent gentrification literature. Those issues are discussed in below-

#### **3.10.1 Drawbacks of Policy Framework**

In many occasion, public Housing planned for middle and lower class are about to give to upper classes. Since 2000, major three public housing initiatives were taken which aimed to build 100 thousand flats for middle and lower class according to income level. But this project failed in last 15 years. Recently the city authority (RAJUK) has opened the bidding process, but for higher income group, and also has increased the property

price from 40, 00000 to 80, 00000 BDT (Euro 40K to 80K) which is beyond the limits of middle class and lower class. The newly build flats will be more luxurious than previously planned since it will include car parking and other facilities. Points should be noted here that having car in Bangladesh is quite expensive due to high tax rate, and only upper middle class to its' upper level could afford it. Experts complained that the City authority (RAJUK) whose prime responsibility is to city development is now engaged in housing business. Moreover, Interesting point is the newly built flats will be delivered within 2016, which has not been even constructed over last 15 years (Prothom Alo, November 2015)

### **3.10.2 Transformation of Old Urban Areas**

The Guardian (March 2015) reported that more than 500 historic buildings in Puran Dhaka (otherwise known as Old Dhaka, the historic core of Bangladesh's capital city) have been demolished in a building frenzy that would happily claim the rest in the last seven years. The Urban Study Group, a voluntary organization, is racing to get historic buildings listed to prevent them from being legally torn down. But as Baro Bari demonstrates, even when Old Dhaka's most memorable and treasured historic buildings are listed, they are not out of danger.

Numerous heritage sites are being demolished rapidly by informal building agents where new-build housing to be build. The Daily Star, October 20, 2015, has made report on the destruction of parts of old Dhaka which brings the Pre-British heritage of the city. Many new structures are being built beside the heritage sites without taking government permission. It concluded that even the city authority, Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha's (Rajuk) Detailed Area Plan does not mark heritage site, like Choto Katra, as s special archaeological zone.

### **3.10.3 Loss of Public Places and Degradation of Neighborhoods**

In many public dialogues and social media, it is viewed that urban neighborhoods are being changing rapidly in Bangladesh. In most of the opinions, this change is much negative than positive. People from major urban areas, for example, Dhaka and Chittagong, claims that the friendly and cooperative nature of urban areas are being changing dramatically, and segregated and monotonous urban lifestyles are growing. The Guardian interviewed an Urban Study Group member, grew up on Pyari Das Road. His family has been in the neighborhood for six generations: "Old Dhaka is very different to New Dhaka," Saha explains. "People in Old Dhaka have contact with each other from as soon as they wake up; they cannot pass a single day without talking to each other. But I have seen apartments in New Dhaka where they don't even know the people in the next apartment. I cannot imagine that scenario here" (The Guardian, March 2015).

### **3.10.4 Urban Expansion and new Build urbanization**

Urban expansion is very rapid in every urban center. (Ahmed, 2013) studied the general trend of land cover change pattern for Dhaka city from 1989-2009. In case of Dhaka, the net contribution to built-up area is mainly from fallow land followed by water body. The expansion of urban area in Dhaka is following the northern and western portions of Dhaka city (Ahmed, 2013).

High infrastructure shortage is the main shortcoming of Dhaka City (Nazem, 2015). Particularly for road network, transportation, drainage, water and sanitation and electricity are adding significantly to development costs. ADB (2012) study shows that where infrastructure corridors have been planned and provided, they have been encroached upon and compensation is required up to 40% to road construction costs (Nazem, 2015).

### **3.10.5 Uneven Land Price Hike**

Expansion of urban areas and rural-urban migration put huge impact on land price hike in all urban centers of Bangladesh. In case of Dhaka, land price has been skyrocketed since last two decades (1990-2000 and 2000-2010) in almost all parts of the city. In a temporal study conducted by Ahmed, M. (Date unknown), However, certain places got greater momentum compared to other. That indicates newcomers with higher purchasing power in certain areas- a primary notion of gentrification. According to his study, top 5 places which shows highest changes in Dhaka city. Those places are such as- Demra (200% to 2900%), Gulshan (267% to 1036%), Lalmatia (200% to 733%), Banani (233% to 650%), Cantonment (150%-650%), (Ahmed, M. Date unknown).

### **3.10.6 Case of Eviction**

Eviction is the commonly visible events in urban areas- especially in slum and other informally inhabiting areas. The Asian Coalition for Housing Rights has monitored evictions in seven Asian countries (Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia and the Philippines) and shown that evictions increased dramatically: between January to June 2004, 334,593 people were evicted in the urban areas of these countries; in January to June 2005, 2,084,388 people were evicted. The major reason for these evictions was/is 'the beautification of the city.



*Image 3-1: Forceful Eviction in Dhaka; the regular scenario in the informal urban areas*

Source- Hossain, (2013)

In most of the cases, Eviction comes with large development projects and in the name of ‘beautification’. Most of the development projects taken frequently, with a very short notice. Alongside these new developments, a new wave of service privatization, of universities, hospitals and schools is sweeping across the city, pricing out the vast majority from access to basic services. An infrastructure project in the city center, Hatirjheel, has displaced almost half a million, mostly urban poor to the new peripheral towns (Hossain, S. Date Unknown). In most of the cases, city’s working populations who used to live in the existing project area become subject of eviction, and must find the city’s impoverished periphery to live.

### **3.10.7 Eviction of Sex Workers from their home in the name of rehabilitation**

Sex workers are the most marginal community in the country. Due to being Muslim dominated society, this community is segregated from the mainstream society and lives in segregated neighborhood. Sex workers are often subject to geographical dispersal, either through criminalization and crackdowns, or through gentrification and urban re-development (nswp, August 2013). There are lots of well documented article can be found where sex worker is being evicted routinely from their home. The trend of evicting sex workers has started since 1999 while Tanbazar brothel of Narayanganj was evicted (Dhaka Tribune, August 2013). A 200 years old brothel was also being evicted from Puranbazar, Madaripur which was located at the heart of the town had around 800 houses. 75% of those houses belonged to the sex workers either by inheritance or by purchasing. The attacks left around 500 sex workers shelter less (ibid).

### **3.10.8 Dominance of Corporate Power**

Corporate and business organizations, and real estate companies’ plays strong influence on public works and on public policy. From daily newspaper articles and social media, it is evident that business communities strongly influence behind government’s action. Most of the time government serves the purpose of those groups.

Two decades ago, the headquarters of the garments owner association (BGMEA) was built in middle of a canal, named- Begunbari, where Prime Minister of Bangladesh laid the foundation of that building. Additionally, the ownership of the land of the building was transferred illegally by Export Promotion Bureau in 2001, although, Dhaka's master plan earmarks the Begunbari canal as a natural water body and a designated flood flow zone, prohibiting any change to its character (The daily star, 2016). However, the headquarters of the association (BGMEA) building was built nearly two decades ago on a prime location- in the way of the storm drainage system, and has violated the Wetlands Protection Act. However, Recently Bangladesh Supreme Court ordered to demolish this illegal establishment and shift it to any other place (The daily star, 2016).





***Image 3-2: Illegal BGMEA Building, on the middle of Begunbari-Hatirjheel canal***

Photo Courtesy: <http://www.thedailystar.net> (left), <http://smilingbangladesh.com> (right)

In another project for residential development, City authority (Rajuk) approved a total of 305 acres out of the 1,247 acres of Bashundhra Residential Area project between 1986 and 1990. The remaining area received conditional approval only, however, this bigger Real Estate Builders ignored the instruction and build many housing around the area. From the official's opinion-" they have taken approval for construction in some areas, but built buildings all over". (Bdnews24, 20 july, 2010).

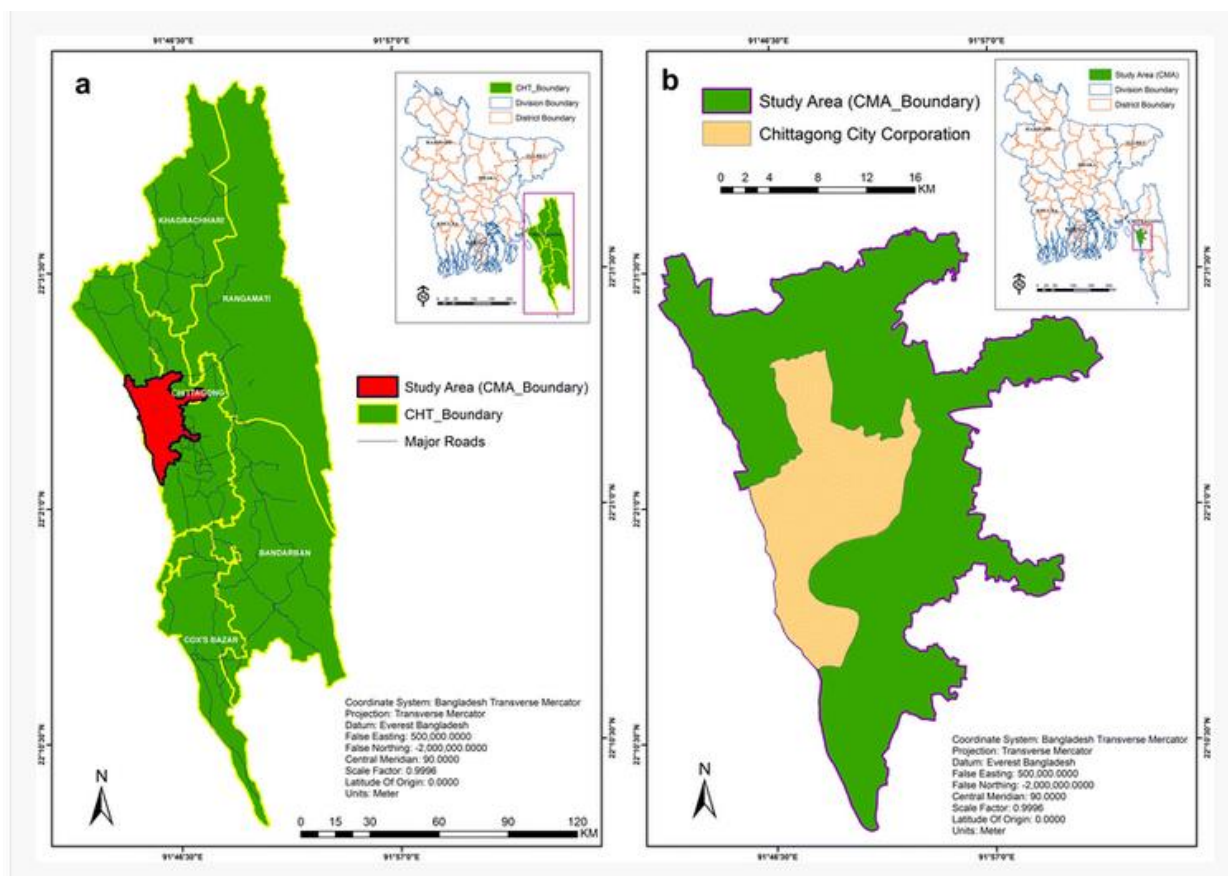
### **3.11 Case Study of Chittagong: Second-largest and Port-City of the Country**

Chittagong is the second-largest and main seaport of Bangladesh. The city is comprised of small hills and narrow valleys, bounded by the Karnaphuli River to the south-east, the Bay of Bengal to the west, and Halda River to the north-east. The city has a population of about 5 million and is constantly growing (Community Report, Chittagong District 2012). Chittagong Municipality was formed under British rule in 22 June 1863 and it has been declared as City Corporation at 31 July 1990 (Banglapedia, 2014).

Chittagong is an important historical and strategic city within the region and the country due to its grand seaport, which provides links to the Indian subcontinent, including ports of Karachi, Kolkata, and Mumbai and the rest of the world. The city is a valuable generator of national wealth, as it holds 40 % of the country's large-scale industries (BBS 2013) and shares in the major seaborne trades of Bangladesh, accounting for 85 %



of imports and 80 % of exports (Chittagong chamber, 2016). Currently, the city and the adjoining areas are home to nearly 4.5 million people, making it the second largest metropolitan city in the country (BBS, 2011).



**Map 3-1: Location of Chittagong District, Chittagong City Corporation and Metropolitan Area**

Source: Ahmed, B (2015)

Greater than city authority, Chittagong Metropolitan Area is situated within 22° 14' and 22° 24' 30" north latitude and between 91° 46' and 91° 53' east longitude. The total area of CMA is approximately 775 km<sup>2</sup> (Ahmed, B. 2015). However, City Corporation is half of metropolitan area. It is comprised of 12 Thana's (second lowest administrative unit) and 41 wards.



**Map 3-2: Existing Administrative Units of Chittagong City and Khulshi Thana**

Source: Banglapedia, 2012

### 3.11.1 Planning Initiatives, Failed in lack of Public Participation

Chittagong City Master Plan was first launched in 1961, two years after the formation of CDA in 1959 where the main focus was on zoning maps for housing and industries. In 1992, the government took the second master plan which includes, structure plan, urban development plan and detailed area plan (DAP) in 1992. Though it approved plan for 1,152 sq km area of the city through a gazette notification in March 1999, the DAP was prepared in 2006 and approved in 2008.

However, most of the planning initiatives went in vain according to the officials from CDA and governments. So far, very little or no reference to drainage planning has given priority in any plan (CMMP-4 1995). Pointing out the failure of previous plan, chairman of CDA Abdus Salam said to The Daily Star that “in the past, the authority did not take opinions from different sections of people while formulating the master plan and Detailed Area Plan (DAP)” (The daily Star, March 08, 2015)

Currently, Chittagong Development Authority (CDA) is going to formulate a new master plan for the port city for the next 20 years from 2016, aiming to transform it into a modern, developed and planned one. In the plan, the prioritized issues like mitigating waterlogging, preserving hills, saving water bodies from being filled up; keeping playgrounds, open spaces and parks; and creating recreational centers in the metropolitan city will get highest priority in the plan, said CDA officials. CDA divided the city into 12 zones in the present DAP; in the new plan, the number of zones might increase to 47, including 41 zones in Chittagong metropolitan area, a zone each for every ward, and six wards outside the metropolitan area. While asked by journalists about

postponement in implementing DAP of the second master plan, Shahinul Islam Khan, chief town planner of CDA, said the authority did not have enough experience to deal with such a colossal affair (The daily Star, March 08, 2015).

### **3.11.2 Housing Situations in Chittagong:**

Similar to Dhaka, Chittagong has also going through housing problems. Apart from housing scarcity, disputes over rental affairs is very massive in the city. Each family needs to pay 55 to 65% percent of their income for their housing. Uddin (2017) has conducted research on legal occurrence regarding rental affairs in Chittagong and Sylhet. He illustrated that in case of Chittagong, rent increase is nearly 10.43% per year. Another notion is that each rental value takes approximately 10.278 years to be double. That means, house rents are becoming double by every decade. From 1991 to 2012, house rent has increased by 250% in Chittagong and Sylhet. A crucial indication from his research shows that those who lives longer period of home (nearly 30 years) are more benefitted than those living in shorter period. It may be doubled within 4-5 years if tenants have replaced very frequently. This notion is very crucial in case of eviction. Most of the time, owner wants to change their renter in a motive to get more profit.

### **3.11.3 Urban Expansion and New-Build Area of Chittagong**

Hasan and Nazem (2016) have done a detection analysis which has shown the relative changes of land cover in Chittagong Metropolitan Area. In their study, Chittagong has shown significantly higher growth compared to expansion of Dhaka, which is 505% in the city corporation and 618 in the greater study area. From 1975-1992, Dhaka shown annual urban expansion of 6.13% (Dewan and Yamaguchi, 2009). But in Chittagong it was 6.59% during 1977-1989. During 1992-2003, Urban expansion of Dhaka was 3.15% (Dewan and Yamaguchi, 2009) where Chittagong 11.33 % during 1989-1999 (Hasan and Nazem, 2016). In the same study, build up area increased by 618% with an annual rate of 17.17 % from 1977 to 2013. Here, dramatic growth took place in the city corporation area 14% per year. Average urban population growth rate is 4.8% from 1974 to 1991 in contrast to national growth rate of only 2.1%. Urban build up areas has increased 8.58% annually during this period (Hasan and Nazem, 2016).



Fig. 2 Time series of land use/land cover maps for 2013–1977

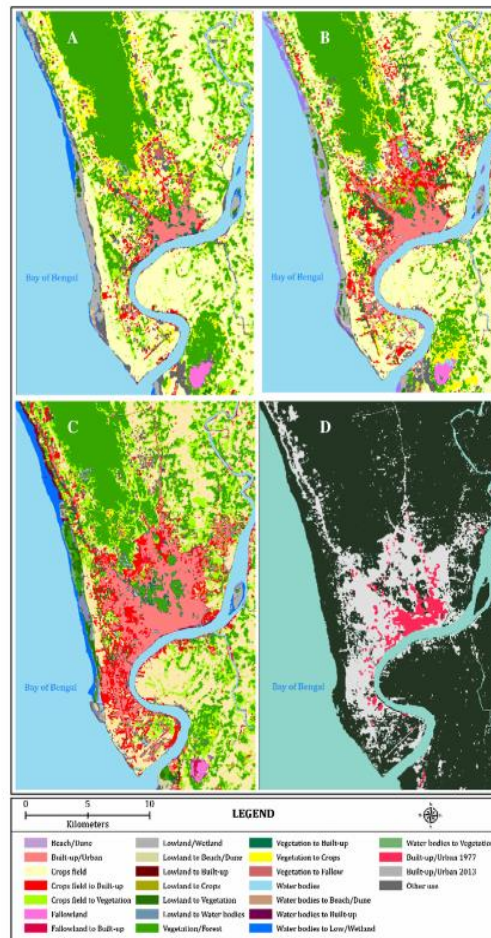


Fig. 3 Land use/cover conversion map. a 1977–1989, b 1989–1999, c 1999–2013, d built-up expansion 1977–2013

### Map 3-3: Growth Pattern of Urban built up areas of Ctg since last 3 decades

Source: Hasan and Nazem, 2016

Since the beginning of its urban history, Kotowali and Double Mooring Thana (second lowest administrative unit) has been the core of the city, which are the most densely populated area in corporation. This region can be viewed as CBD (central business district). This zone is the mixture of small industries, commercial buildings, offices and dwellings (Islam, 2009). Main build up and industrial installations are found at the port along the river, around the railway in pahartoli, near to the airport, along the major trunk road and within kalurghat industrial zone.

However, from the study of Hasan and Nazem (2016), major changes took place around immediate periphery of the old town and traditional CBD has been changed. Major commercial offices and financial headquarters has shifted to Agrabad (Western part of the city). To the south and west, major growth occurred in Agrabad and beyond, toward Potenga peninsula. In the Northwest, expansion took along Dhaka-Chittagong rail and road corridor. To the Northeast, major changes was in the CDA Avenue to Hathazari road. To the east, Development was limited due to regular flooding and low-lying land.



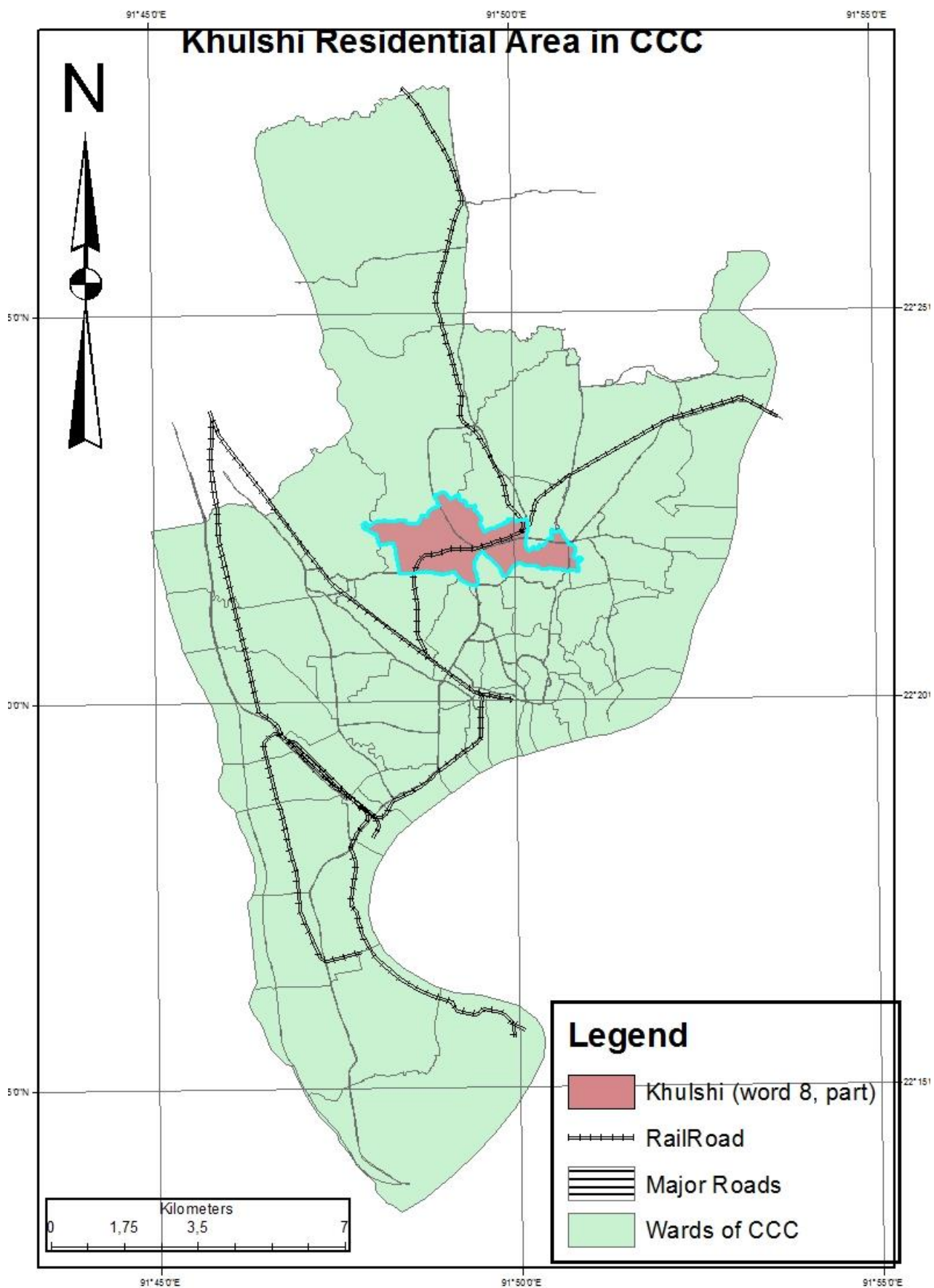
#### **3.11.4 Capital Investment in Ctg**

Analyzing physical landscape of study area and the reports on existing and upcoming projects, capital reinvestment is explored. Recently, government has declared an investment plan worth \$7 billion which will be implemented in Chittagong soon. This investment will be in 58 projects in different sectors, where, tourism will be in priority. The minister has claimed that with this investment, “Chittagong will get a new and modern look within three years” (the daily star, February 2, 2016). A very new commercial establishment, called The Chittagong City Center has been started in 2013 which will be completed in 2017. It is 204.2 meters (670 feet) tall, is a proposed and approved 51-story tower in Agrabad Commercial Area in Chittagong. If it will be built according to the projected specifications, it would be the tallest building in the city and the tallest in Bangladesh.

In Chittagong as well as in Khulshi, numerous real estate developers are operating actively. Notable real estate developers in Chittagong and Khulshi are such as- Sanmar Properties, Epic, Navana real estate, Ca property development, HIRaman Associates limited, Bashudha Builders Ltd and other groups (Source: marketing materials). Khulshi R/A is very near to luxurious hotels and shopping complex. A good number of shopping complex and hotels are agglomerated near to this area. In reality, most of the consumers of these establishments come from the elite and business class- who lives mainly in Khulshi R/A. The location of the area is very favorable to for all sort of public commodity and accessible from any part from the city. Jakir Hossein Road, which was constructed after 1994 is the major entry route from Capital Dhaka to Chittagong is along this region.

#### **3.11.5 Case study of Khulshi Residential Area: Overview and Planning Process**

The name of this case study is Khulshi Residential Area, a part of Khulshi Thana (Thana, along with *upazila*, is a sub-district in the administrative geography of Bangladesh, Banglapedia-2016), and its surrounding areas. Khulshi R/A is officially named as ward no 8 (part). The Khulshi Thana consists of 3 full and 1-part city wards and 45 city Mahallas (the lowest urban geographic unit, *ibid*). The average population of each ward and Mahallas are 69656 and 6192 respectively. (BBS, 2011).



**Map 3-4: Location of Khulshi R/A in Chittagong City Corporation**

Source: Author-2017

The Thana occupies an area of 13.11 sq. km. Absolute location of the Thana is located in between 22020' and 22023' north latitudes and in between 91046' and 91049' east longitudes. The relative location of the Thana is bounded on the north by Bayjid Bostami thana and Siakunda upazila, east by Panchlaish and Kotwali Thanas, south by Double Mooring and Pahartali Thanas and west by Pahartali Thana and Sitakunda Upazila (BBS, 2011).

It is one of the very few planned parts in the city and single most important luxurious area too. From an interview of a city planner of Chittagong Metropolitan Area, it is found that planning of Khulshi Residential Area was planned before 1970. But very few residents were lived there until 1990s. Development of this area had started after independence, more specifically, after 1993 when a connecting road, known as- Jakir Hossein Road was constructed. However, beginning of hill cutting in the area was started during 1986, which made more space for new construction and more plots are being ready for building house.

Previously, hilly terrain and transportation problem was the major barrier of expanding this part. The area was disconnected from the city center and main road connecting Chittagong city with capital Dhaka. Major changes took place dramatically after the construction of Jakir Hossein Road. Before establishing Jakir Hossein Road, this area was almost vacant with very low population. This scenario has been changed dramatically after construction of this road after 1993.

In Chittagong as well as in Khulshi, numerous real estate developers are operating actively. Notable real estate developer in Chittagong and Khulshi are such as- Sanmar Properties, Epic, Navana real estate, Ca property development, HIRaman Associates limited, Bashudha Builders Ltd and other groups (Source: marketing materials).

Khulshi R/A is very near to luxurious hotels and shopping complex. A good number of shopping complex and hotels are agglomerated near to this area. In reality, most of consumers of these establishments are from elite and business class who lives mainly in Khulshi R/A. The location of the area is very favorable to for all sort of public commodity and accessible from any part from the city. Jakir Hossein Road, which was constructed after 1994 is the major entry route from Capital Dhaka to Chittagong is along this region.

### **Population Characteristics of Khulshi Thana (sub-district)**

According to Population and Housing Census 2011, the total population of the Thana is 278623 of which 148536 are males and 130087 are females. The sex ratio of the thana is 114 which has been tremendously decreased in 2011 as against 125 in 2001. The decadal population growth rate for the Thana is 14.49%. According to the census data in greater Khulshi Thana, part of ward no 8 (current case study area) has the lowest population but highest education rate, 71.5%. Other wards, 9, 13, 14 have education rate below 60 % but population near to double compared to ward 8 (part), (BBS, 2011). It indicates that Khulshi RA contributed largely to that education percentage but with lower population.

## **Literacy Rate**

In Khulshi thana, 66.1% population aged 7 years and above are literate. It is interesting point is that Chittagong regional literacy rate is 58.9 percent, Chittagong divisional rate is 52.7 and Bangladesh National literacy rate is 51.8 according to 2011 census. Here, according to the definition set by census authority, literacy denotes to the ability of writing a letter in any language. Literacy rate is calculated for population 7 years and over, 15 years and over and also for population of all ages (BBS, 2011).

## **Type of Housing Structure**

In the Thana, 37.1% general households live in Pucca house, 30.6% in semi-pucca house, 25.8% in kutcha house and the remaining 6.5% live in Jhupri. Pucca housing (or pukka) refers to dwellings that are designed to be solid and permanent. The term is applied to housing in South Asia built of substantial material such as stone, brick, cement, concrete, or timber (Qadeer 2006). In contrast to Pucca, Kutcha means 'raw, unripe'. It refers to buildings of flimsy construction. Pucca homes are typically made of concrete, stone, clay tiles, and/or metal, in contrast to older homes made of mud and organic material (Times of India, 2010-03-22).



## 4 Methodology, Data and Methods

The aim of this research is to explore the process of gentrification in Bangladesh, in general, with an in-depth study on Khulshi residential area of Chittagong. Since no other previous study of gentrification has been done on Bangladesh, this study uses multiple methods to explore a holistic scenario.

Based on the research objectives, a survey has been conducted with a pre-structured questionnaire (N.B. see the questionnaire in **Appendix section** with the specific explanation). With the structured questionnaire, the survey has been done in two groups of respondents in the area. The two groups of respondents are being classified into- the gentrifier and the gentrified. The gentrifier group is expected to live in the luxurious Khulshi residential area (Khulshi RA), and gentrified groups (or plausibly, subject to future gentrification) belong to surrounding areas of Khulshi. The target of the questionnaire survey is to find qualitative facts rather than quantitative information.

Using explorative analysis, two major questions are being raised and answered in this thesis

1. Is the new-build urbanization of Chittagong can be identified as new-build gentrification?
2. If it so, what kind of process is taking place and what underlying factors are present in the case area? It is evident that gentrification or new build gentrification in southern cities is very different than gentrification in Northern Cities. From this presumption, this research reflects on what kind of understanding we can have from Chittagong.

### Method

Since the aim of this study was to explore the overall picture and the mode of gentrification in Bangladesh, a mixed method has been used in this research. The type of mixed method is type of explorative study. This study, however, was done along with quantitative analysis.

Qualitative methods, including literature review, questionnaire survey, personal interview and visual analysis has been used to understand the subjective and in-depth knowledge of this process. Prime focus was given to qualitative study, since the main objective is to explore the gentrification process in Bangladesh.

However, quantitative analysis was also used in minor extent. Quantitative part of the research was analyzing census data on greater Khulshi Thana. The quantitative analysis provided a contrasting picture of Khulshi area comprised with other areas in Chittagong and helped in framing our particular study area. Quantitative analysis also helped in analyzing the surveyed questionnaire and in presenting charts. This method helped to frame the case study and to analyze the objectivity of the study. The methods being used in this study are described below systematically.

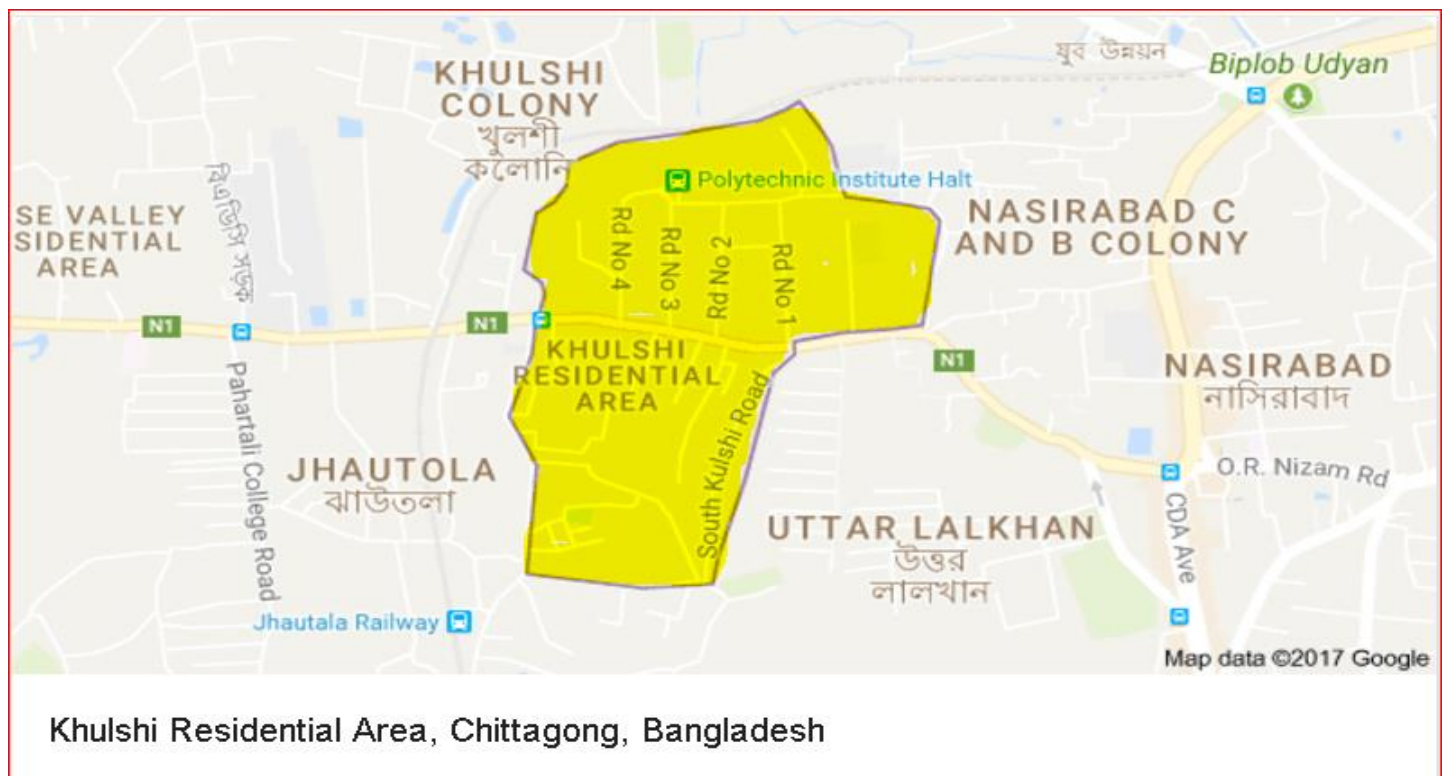
## 4.1 Literature Review

Since no prior research regarding gentrification in Bangladesh has been done before, understanding the context of the research was pivotal. In this regard, a literature review method was used to understand the context of the case area (Chittagong and Khulshi).

Before designing the research and field study, a moderate volume of literature regarding housing pattern, urbanization, growth pattern, policy, issues and problems in the area was studied. Though literature review- in general for the whole study was conducted beforehand, this method has been done again to understand the context thoroughly. This literature chosen from a wide range of published data: for example, journal article, newspaper article, community report, community webpages, and other sources. Articles published regarding the urban growth pattern of Chittagong using Remote Sensing and GIS techniques was reviewed primarily to understand the growth of the city and new-build area since last four decades.

## 4.2 Questionnaire survey

Based on the research objectives, a survey has been conducted with a pre-structured questionnaire. With a structured interview, the survey has been done in two groups of respondents in the area who are being hypothesized as the gentrifier and the gentrified.



**Map 4-1: Case Study Area; Khulshi Residential Area (highlighted in yellow) and surrounding areas of Khulshi**

(Source: Google maps-2016)

## **Focusing the Subject; gentrifier and gentrified**

Two Groups of respondents have been selected for questionnaire survey: the gentrifier and gentrified. In this research, people living inside Khulshi Residential area is expected as the gentrifiers group, and the people living outside and surrounding areas is hypnotized as being gentrified. The target of the questionnaire survey is to find the qualitative evidence in the area rather than quantitative information.

The questionnaire survey was conducted in two phases: a general sample survey in the primary phase, and a specific survey on selective respondents. The number of the general sample survey were total 40, where 15 were taken from Khulshi Residential Area and 25 sample from surrounding areas of Khulshi. Both areas are further subdivided into five zones, and equal numbers of samples have been collected from each zone. This survey provided an overall picture of the study area. After that, a selective survey was done, where five qualitative interviews were conducted. Here, four respondents were selected, two from each group who has already been surveyed before. Additionally, one in-depth interview was taken from a city planner where he explained detail process of planning and other processes. This part of the interview has enabled to explain a detail understanding about the context.

One problem in this method is that the element of replication is seen where the questions are the same for every interviewee; they follow a predetermined and standardized list of questions, in the same order. However, since the respondents are being classified into two groups, that is, gentrifier and gentrified, our question pattern is quite different for each group. In some extent, this kind of interview allows the respondent for an open response in the participants' own words.

### **4.2.1 Sampling Method**

Both cluster method and the simple random sampling method have been used to collect empirical data. First, the area was divided into certain sub-areas geographically (cluster). Then, equal numbers of samples of each sub-area (zone) was collected using the simple random sampling method. In summary, the cluster method was used firstly, and then, the simple random sampling method were used to collect data.

In Khulshi R.A., ten surveys were conducted from northern part, since this area is the most expensive and luxurious, and five were collected from southern part. Northern part is subdivided into four roads, two samples were collected from each side of the road. In outside Khulshi, five zones were selected around Khulshi R. A., then five samples were collected from each zone.

### **4.2.2 Selection of the Respondent**

Because of some recent incidents in the country, most of the people feels insecure and shows reluctance to cooperate in surveys. That is why, the field survey method needed to change and was designed according to the situation. In selecting respondents, the non-probabilistic convenience method was used in this survey. In this method, any respondent, who is present or is more willing to cooperative in the household is chosen to

for the interview. Though the risk of generalisation is at higher level in this method, this, however, it obtains higher response rates and reduces the cost of data collection in practice.

### **4.2.3 Analysis of the Interview**

The analysis of interviews in current study has followed six-phase guidelines provided by Braun and Clark (2006). The analysis was done based on emerging themes from the transcripts what stated by Braun and Clark (2006, p.10) as ‘something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set’. Since the interview transcripts are fixed with themes, the analysis of the interviews therefore becomes thematic analysis. (Betti, 1990) defined the thematic analysis as “a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data’ (1990, cited by Braun & Clark 2006, p.6). Methodological hermeneutics have been used to provide overall guidelines in using inherent theme identification. According to this hermeneutics theory, a meaning of a part can only be understood if it is related to the whole. The meaning of any part of the interview is thus related to the whole; notion of gentrification and its apparent exposure, eviction and other motifs. The exact quotes are also introduced according to the relevance of the theme.

### **4.3 Visual Research Method**

To explore the approach of builders and gentrifiers in the area the qualitative content analysis method has been used. This has been done through analyzing marketing materials and other visual productions of this area.

With other social science division, geography faced cultural turn at the beginning of the 1970s decades where culture became the focal point of study. In this approach, culture is understood as the complex concept which is interested in which ways social life is constructed through the ideas of people, and the practices that propagates from those ideas. Those meanings and ideas can be in implicit or explicit form, conscious or subconscious, reality or fantasy; therefore, conveyed through different ways. For example, everyday speech or conversations, social or political rhetoric, high art, television programs, movies, advertisements etc. are some of those ways of expression of culture (Rose, 2016). Here, the social scientist’s role is to study those forms of culture to understand the public way of life. Visual analysis stems from that philosophy where visuality and depiction are being studied critically. David Harvey in his book ‘Condition of Postmodernity’ argued that visual representations exemplify postmodernity. Here, visuality means the way in which the human vision- physiological capability of the human eye is being constructed (Rose, 2006). Visual analysis studies visual culture which sees visual as a part of social life (Rose, 2006). Referring to Maria Sturken and Lisa Cartwright” s (2001) book, “Practice of Looking”, Rose (2016) said an image is not just what it is in itself, it is seen by particular spectators who look in particular ways. Semiology, the study of signs or signature, is one of the core method in visual research. The selected visual methods used here is being discussed in the following sections.

### 4.3.1 Semiology

Semiology is the understanding about signs, stems from the work of Ferdinand de Saussure's 'Course on General Linguistics' (Rose, 16). Saussure argued that sign is the basic unit of language which consists of two parts; signified and signifier. Signified can be an object or a concept whether the signifier is a sound or an image attached to a signified (Rose, 2016). Signified might have multiple meaning depending on context or culture. However, the actual object in the world that the sign is related to is called the referent of the sign (Rose, 2016).

The work of American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce has contributed to typology of signs in more detail. He suggested three kinds of signs is crucial to understand the relation between the signifier and the signified; Icon, Index and Symbol. (Labert, 2013) commented on Peirce's basic claim that "the sign consists of three inter-related parts: a sign, an object, and an interpretant. The sign can be viewed as the signifier; for example, a written word, an utterance, smoke as a sign for fire etc. The object, on the other hand, is best supposed of as whatever is signified; for example, the object to which the written or spoken word attaches, or the fire signified by the smoke. The interpretant, the most innovative and distinctive feature of Peirce's account, is best thought of as the understanding that we have of the sign/object relation. The importance of the interpretant for Peirce is that signification is not a simple dyadic relationship between the sign and the object: a sign signifies only in being interpreted. This makes the interpretant central to the content of the sign, in that, the meaning of a sign is manifest in the interpretation that it generates in sign users" (Labert, 2013).

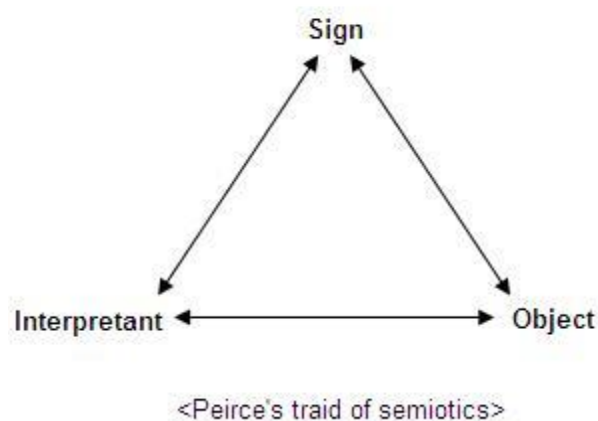


Figure: Triangular relationship among three components of semiotics: sign, object and interpretant (Source: Atkin, A. (2010a)).

Peirce uses the term 'semiotic' as a synonym for logic, which is the name for the "formal, doctrine of signs". For Peirce, semiotic is composed of triadic structures, which conveys the interdependent relationships between the elements of triads. Peirce's semiotics is foremost composed by sign-interpretant-object triadic relations.

Grady, (2008) argued that “the social sciences generally use three types of visual imagery as evidentiary materials in inquiry and argument: photographs, video, and graphic representations in the form of charts and maps. Pictures are one of the three major expressions that data used by the social sciences can take. The other two are numbers and words, which most commonly are derived from either a survey questionnaire, an entry in an ethnographer's field notes or as a transcript of an interview” (Grady, J 2008).

Grady, J (2008) claimed that visual research can contribute to social science in 5 ways- “

- How pattern, variation and change are organized socially and culturally;
- integrating levels of social organization;
- how social processes are organized;
- how we respond emotionally to events; and
- how research findings should be reported most clearly and effectively”.

Rose (2006) illustrated that all visual representations contains three components; the site of production, the site of the image, and the site of the audiencing. The site of production involves Technological issues related with those visual representations, compositionality of image or photograph, social and economic processes behind those representations and most importantly, the author (artist, director, maker or subjects behind those visual representations. The site of the image deploys the meaning of the image itself. It involves the compositional components of the image, for example, subjects, color, frames etc. The site of audiencing means, in simple, to who images are being projected (Rose 2006).

A visual analysis addresses the formal elements of artwork —visual attributes such as the color, line, texture, and size. A visual analysis may also include the historical context or interpretations of meaning. Rose (2006) illustrated some critical approaches to study images; for example, analyzing the content, color, spatial organization (eye level), focus, light and expressive content etc. of the particular image.

#### **4.3.2 Visual Content Analysis:**

It is associated with the interpretation of images produced by media, newspapers or corporations, authority and other interest groups.

Rose, (2016) pointed out four Steps in Visual Content Analysis

- ✓ Finding the image (using the particular sampling method)
- ✓ Devising a set of categories for coding
- ✓ Coding the image
- ✓ Analysis of the result

### **4.3.3 Compositional Analysis:**

Compositional analysis is another important method in visual analysis. This is comprised of analyzing many components of an image, for example, content, color, spatial organization (shot distance, focus, angle, the point of view), light, expressive content

Drawing from Saussure's idea, Barth, (1973) pointed out that sign consist of two basic units: the signifier and the signified. With that, another term is referent, which means what a sign means to the real world. As a part of this thesis, I used these visual methods mentioned above in a selective way. In this research, I used multiple sources of images for visual analysis. It ranges from hundreds of marketing materials produced by real estate entrepreneurs in Khulshi area, images attached with newspaper articles, images from community organizations and google street view images. The results of the analysis are discussed in the result section.

## **5 Results and Analysis of Empirical Data**

This chapter is basically divided into two parts; results from visual analysis, and results from questionnaire survey and other field data. Visual analysis was used to detect landscape change, investment pattern in the area and socio-cultural identity of the new incomer. Results from the questionnaire survey and from the interview have brought more detail of those issues with some in depth understanding.

### **5.1 Results of Visual Analysis**

Using visual analysis and content analysis, capital reinvestment and landscape changes have been studied. Based on the theoretical ground of visual analysis, this study drawn on the appearance of the area- theoretically which designates the place and identity.

Google street map has given the base of analysis to observe the appearance of the existing area, and its contrasting nature with surrounding area. In search of place and identity making, I analyzed marketing materials from major real estate builders operating in the area. Around hundreds of marketing materials has been analyzed for the conceptualizing the second issue.

#### **5.1.1 Capital Investment in the Area (Khulshi)**

The trend of investment has been drawn visually, rather than in monetary value. It has been done through the visual method because it was very difficult to get official information from City Corporation and private investors. Local or national authorities (both public and private) view this information as confidential and do not release that information publicly. For this reason, the investment pattern has been measured qualitatively, using marketing materials, pictures and public opinion.

Since last couple of decades, there has been huge investment took place on the area. Most of the investment is mainly in real estate, luxury shopping malls, restaurants, luxurious hotels, amusement parks and other facilities. Before this, some establishment was already there, for example, Indian High Commission, The Russian consulate, Television Bhabhan (building) and some other government service centers, for example, Dampara Police Line, Weather and Earthquake Measuring Centre, Jhautala Wireless Station, Railway Workshop, Directorate of Environment, Office of National Housing Authority etc. were there. However, those establishments are mainly owned by national government. Therefore, private establishments followed and have taken advantage of those public buildings. Now, many new aristocratic shopping centers, for instance, Sanmar Ocean City, Amin center, etc. has been built in recent times. Some new amusement parks, for instance, Foy's Lake amusement park, The Concord Amusement park, Water park, Railway Museum, Zoological Garden etc. has been established in previous decades. Apart from that, massive investment has been done in the real estate sector, and many more are coming in very soon.



### 5.1.2 Landscape Change; Observation of physical change

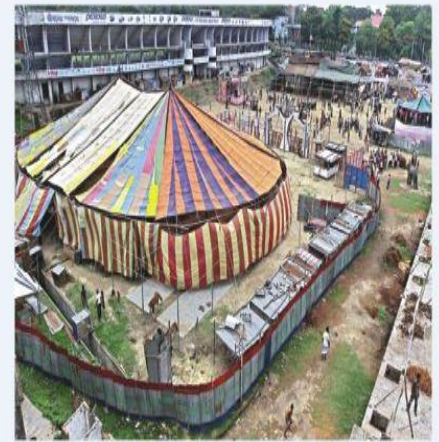
Analyzing images from various sources shows that massive physical changes have taken place in the area. This whole region is going through rapid landscape changes compared with previous years. The changes are visible in both visual images as well as respondent's opinion.



*Image 5-1: Picture 5 1: Dual nature of the existing area*

(Source: Google Street map)

There is very sharp contrast visually in the area. Adjacent areas of Khulshi are mixed of slums, small huts and other temporary establishments. Many Buildings are built on public land which is very congested. However, many new buildings and construction works have been going on in the area. It can forecast that many of those small houses and slums might be replaced by those new projects very soon.



***Image 5-2: Transformation of public place into private use***

**(a former general playground into swimming pool for selective residents)**

**Source:** The joint images (above) were collected from google street view (left) and The Daily Star, published on 8 May 2012. Image in the bottom was collected from BDnews.24.com on 20 May 2017.

The images above indicate the transformation of a playground and fair zone into swimming pool. Chittagong Outer stadium in previous time (top) and the present scenario in 2017 (bottom). This stadium is a few kilometers near to Khulshi. Previously, it was used as the everyday public playground (top, right).



Periodically, traditional fairs and socio-political programs were taking place there (top, left). However, this area is being changed into swimming pool (picture at the bottom). Present Mayor has initiated this project without taking any public opinion, which has created a lot of controversy and protests.

### **Visually Recognizable transformation**



*Image 5-3: Transition begins; visually noticeable transformation by gentrification between two areas*

(Source: <https://streetviewdownload.eu>, 2017)

A very important aspect of the study area is its dual character. There are multistoried buildings, luxurious apartments, clubs, neat and clean street zones and so on for the elites, but also clumsy slums, densely populated neighborhoods, open dustbins in the roadside and congested traffic in the adjacent areas.



*Image 5-4: The Sign of Upcoming Investment (Proposed Khulshi Club)*

(Source: [www.ckcl.org](http://www.ckcl.org), 2017)

### **5.1.3 Social Changes: Evolving new culture; mixed of Bollywood, Western and local fusion**

The study area exhibits distinct culture which significantly varies from the adjacent areas. Analyzing the images of community programs and perceptions gained through interview shows the study area has gained distinct cultural identity. With the existing elitist culture, influence of Indian films and western satellite culture has significantly influenced in forming this new identity.

The Khulshi Cub can be viewed as the image of the new and elite community. The incomer in the gentrified area shows the notion of Clark (2005) that ‘a change in the population of landowners such that the new users are of a high socio-economic status than the previous users, together with an associated change in the built environment through a reinvestment in fixed capital’ (Clarke, 2005: 258)

Along with this, Chittagong co-operative housing society is another influential group. From the opinion of a city planner, it is found that the both communities maintains very strict rules in recruiting new member. The professions of the dwellers are mainly top business owners, highest officials from national and multinational companies, local landed elite and other influential persons. However, the Planner mentioned that not all the dwellers living in the area can be member of this club. But very few, only those who have high socio-economic and political status can join the club. In other words, this club can be said as representative of gentrifier.

From the opinion of a city planner, Chittagong co-operative housing society possess strong influence on planning of different projects and implementation. The members are mainly of elite group who have political and economic power. They are mainly descendent from elite classes during Pakistan period 1947-1971. Form

that time, only those who have high political and socio-economic status could only get plot. This trend has been continued after independence.



*Image 5-5: Cultural fusion, evolving new community holding mixed culture*

(Source: Chittagong Khulshi Club Limited, [www.ckcl.org](http://www.ckcl.org), 2017)

#### **5.1.4 Production of Exclusive Place**

From analyzing marketing materials, two kinds of income profiles are targeted by the real estate developers: the wealthy and the higher middle-class families. The marketing materials from the real estate developers show very detailed illustration of the upcoming projects. From the depiction of the materials, it is assumed that these are targeted to highly rich and elite class of the city. Most of the projects shows from the sky view, highlighting rooftops with helipad, swimming pool, badminton courts, spa, and other luxurious facilities.

Two kinds of advertisements have been observed from the builders; one is for highly rich population and second is for higher middle-class families. These two target groups are generally common in all analyzed materials.



**Marketing materials targeted to super rich population; sky view projection, luxury facilities, large apartment**



***Image 5-6: Marketing materials from the builders; indicating Socio-economic status of target population***

**Source: SANMAR properties (left and right) and Navana Group (middle)**

Marketing materials targeting to highly rich population has distinct appearance. The identifiable visual elements of this class are the sky-view projection to show luxury facilities at rooftop, use of green and blue color to make it ‘nature friendly’, large apartment size, duplex house, spacious parking lots and other. The aim of sky-view projection is to show luxury facilities at rooftop; helipad, swimming pool, gardens, tennis court and other.

In Bangladesh perspective, these facilities are near to inaccessible for middle to lower economic class people. In this way, the target of these materials is to attract super rich and very high-income population into the area.

### **Advertisement targeting to higher middle class; landscape projection, high rise, small sized apartment**

Another type of advertising materials is targeted to higher middle class with single families. Here, the Signifier are small apartments especially for the couples but with enormous unit. This Signified affordable housing for new middle class, characterized by educated, single family. Additionally, the target group might not wealthy enough to afford luxurious duplex house. In this regard, their preference is small unit with affordable price. Because of increasing university educated generation, this new group is being growing up very rapidly.





*Image 5-7: Housing advertisements targeted to higher middle class- single family*

Source: [www.banglabuysell.com](http://www.banglabuysell.com)-2017

## **5.2 Results from Questionnaire Survey**

As it was mentioned before, a semi-structured questionnaire survey has been conducted on both Khulshi Residential Area (gentrified) and outside area of Khulshi (non-gentrified or plausibly, a subject to future gentrification). After questionnaire survey, an in-depth interview has been conducted from key respondents.

### **5.2.1 Socio-economic profile of the area: profession, education, income**

Socio-economic study of this part is done based on questionnaire survey from the two areas; Khulshi residential area and its surrounding areas.

Most of the respondents living outside Khulshi are small business entrepreneurs or low-level service holders. Both male and female in this class have secondary to higher secondary level education. Their average income varies from 10,000 to 30,000 BDT (84 Bangladeshi Taka (BDT) is equal to 1 euro).

In Khulshi, business is the main profession. There are also some highly-paid professionals who can afford high living prices. Their education level varies; especially the businessmen have secondary to university degree. The professionals from the high salary jobs are mainly engineers, doctors or with have a business degree from a university. The average monthly income of these residents is around 150,000 to 200,000 BDT.

From the opinion of Khulshi residents, major sinks of their income are lifestyle rather than basic expenditure. Though their basic expenditure is also higher than surrounding areas, they must pay a high amount of money to maintain their social status and quality life style. Monthly expenses are not less than 150,000 in Khulshi area. Precisely, these expenses are based on social costs, rather than commodity. To maintain social status, the residence must pay more. These social costs mainly consist of an expensive school for the children (English medium), must have at least 1-2 cars per family, 2800-3000 sq. feet house and its maintenance cost etcetera. Additionally, utility costs are higher for this area since its supply is uninterrupted. The residents must pay 1-1.5 percent higher price per unit than other area for electricity, gas, and water and sewerage services. The average age of the household head is above 50 years, but in Khulshi it ranges from 20 to 40 years.

### **5.2.2 Reason for moving, choosing this neighborhood**

In Khulshi, many respondents think that living in the Khulshi area is prestigious. Since it has a good reputation, wealthier people tend to live there. Having a diplomatic zone, and being a salient area without having worry about lower income people etc. may contribute to “the prestige” or good reputation of that area. Security is one of the frequent responses respondents give as reason for having chosen this area. Even though this area is small and enclaved, it has a police station.



Most of the buildings and large apartment are gated. People think that this makes the area quiet, free from noise or congestion. Good surrounding weather is also got importance; this area is free from open dustbins- which are common in many other parts of the city.

In benglai, some respondents say- “Valo kichu pete hole khoroch korte hoi. Which means, you need to pay more to get good quality.

Dami jinish valo hoi” means- “Everything is good because it is expensive”

The aesthetic value of the area can also be the single most important factor behind major preferences.

#### **Increase of Gated Community**



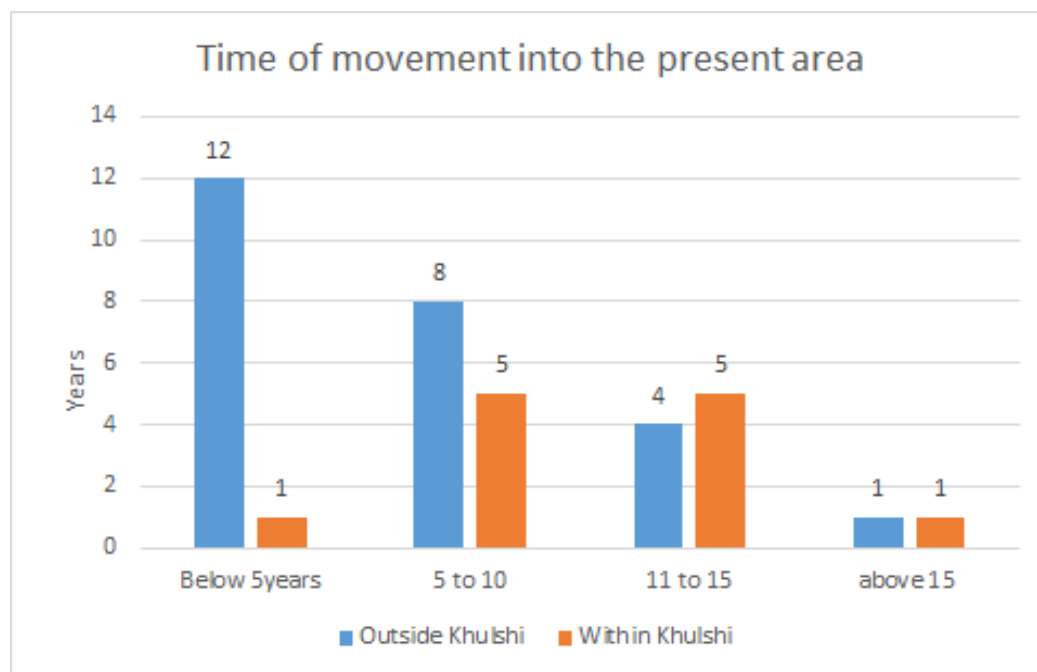
***Image 5-8: Gated community in the area***

Affordability has become an important issue. Here, affordability does not mean cheaper price, instead the price is much high than in the other areas, but it means people here can afford the apartments. One interesting point raised in the survey was that people prefer to live with the elite, and the rich.

Compared to Khulshi, there were fewer reasons for living around Khulshi area. Very significant portion of residence outside Khulshi think these areas have better opportunities for everything. This basically means their job opportunities and housing. The tourism centers nearby have influenced for many to live there. Foy's lake amusement park and other tourist attraction have also influenced a certain portion of residents to choose

the area. These attractions have created jobs and small business opportunities in this area. The hospital nearby can also be included into the shortlisted reasons for choosing the surrounding regions of Khulshi.

### 5.2.3 Time of moving into current area



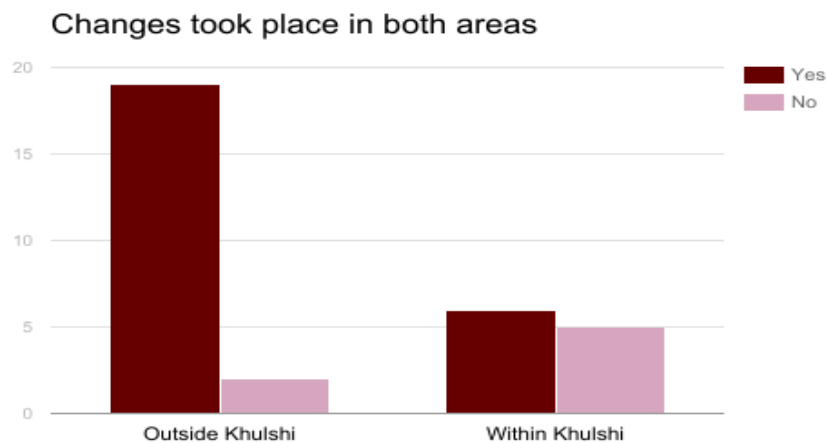
*Figure 5-1: Starting time of settlement in both areas*

Source- Field Survey'2016-17

From the survey, it is seen that most of the people living outside Khulshi have moved into the area within 5 to 10 years. In contrast, majority of people living inside Khulshi have arrived 11 to 15 years before, only a minor group of people came 5 to 10 years before. In both areas, very few people have lived there for more than 15 years.

### 5.2.4 Changes of Neighborhood from Respondents Perception

In observing change, people from outside Khulshi are more vocal than Khulshi. 90 percent of respondent from surrounding areas said they have observed significant changes since previous years. Few of the people living in Khulshi area provided witness to some changes, but majority of the people said they did not notice any changes at all. Most of them remains almost silent or provided 'no answer' in response to this question.



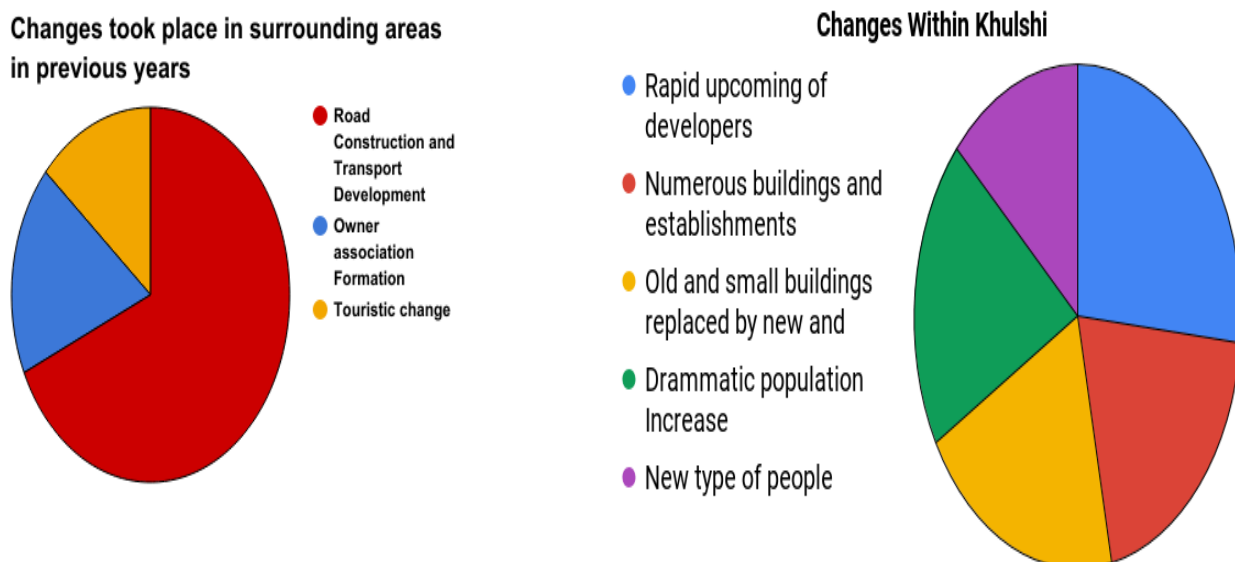
**Figure 5-2: Respondent's Perception of neighborhood changes in both areas**

Source- Field Survey'2016-17

### 5.2.5 Types of changes being observed in previous year

‘People of new faces are growing up; new types of people are seen’

Majority of the resident from surrounding area have observed road construction as the main changes that has been occurred since their living. Some of them pointed out touristic changes in last years. Though majority of the people of Khulshi area was silent in previous question in observing changes, however, developer-led changes become very prominent to the people living Khulshi area. That include new buildings, offices, shopping malls and other establishments. The people pointed out that small buildings and traditional bungalows are being demolished by the developers and being replaced by multistoried apartments. This creates dramatic population increase in the area.



*Figure 5-3: Type of changes in Khulshi and outside area*

Source- Field Survey'2016-17

**“People of new faces are growing up; new types of people are seen”. “Small buildings and traditional bungalows are being demolished by the developers and being replaced by multistoried apartments”.**

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### **Reason for leaving previous area**

House rent hike, natural migration, job distance has been viewed as prime reasons for the people living in surrounding area. In contrary, dissatisfaction to previous congested neighborhood, affording own apartment in current area, wanting to live city's most prestigious area became prime reasons for people living Khulshi area.

### **5.2.6 Satisfaction to neighborhood**

#### **‘Special line for utility service in Khulshi area’**

Electricity supply has been major advantage in the areas in both Khulshi and around Khulshi, but there is sharp distinction among the mode of supply. In surrounding areas, people just satisfy with access to electricity, although the whole city commonly face severe blackout which is no exception to these areas. Additionally, advantage of better job and livelihood are some of the advantages of surrounding areas. People also pointed out that these areas have better drainage facilities than previous areas. It should be noted that Chittagong city as severe flooding problem during monsoon, most of the flooding are flash flood because of gradient.

In Khulshi area, aesthetic issues, prestige, better transportation with spacious road and parking, healthy and pollution free environment have become major advantage of this area. People think beautiful hilly areas with new buildings are major attractions of this area. Living with well-educated, wealthy, and sophisticated people have become significantly advantageous for the residents. It makes them prestigious, and will bring good prospect for their children’s future. All buildings are spacious, not congested, which makes hustle free living. Transportation is also very good; the society has the most spacious roads in the city with good network of main road and linking roads. There are pedestrian roads, so residents can have walk all the time safely.

Since all families have car, there are single to multiple parking facility for almost every flat. The environment is clean and there found no open dustbin in the area, which is very common in other areas of the city. Additionally, from the interview taken from the people living inside Khulshi it is found that this area gets special line for utility service; water, gas, electricity and better drainage system. For the better and uninterrupted service, they have to pay more per unit price.

Security has also become important issue for living in this area. Though it is a small area, but has a police station with Director General’s office in the area. In people’s view, the area is gated, and society gates are provided with high security especially at night; they have no worry for theft, robbery or any other crime. Since there is embassy; both Russian and Indian high commission, so social environment seems good to the neighbors. Short distance for educational institutions; School, college and university, have also become important satisfaction factor.

#### **5.2.7 Advantage of living in both Area**

Electricity supply is the most crucial commodity in many parts of the city where load-shedding (blackout) is very common. However, surrounding areas of Khulshi has better facility with electricity. 17 respondents said electricity is the major advantage of this area. Transportation is also another advantage of this region. Dhaka-Chittagong highway has gone through this region. This region is also blessed with hospital which makes this area better advantageous.

Chittagong city faced flash flood in every monsoon season. It happens because of the city is situated in hilly area, though most of the major hills were being cut-down in last couple of decades. Cascade regions of the city being flooded during the days of heavy rain. However, the people of surrounding areas points out that this region is free from flood because of having better drainage facility. Another major advantage of living on those region is better opportunity for livelihood and other commodities. Foy's lake amusement park has also made this region reputed. Establishment of Foy's lake amusement park might have created certain amount of jobs for local people.

According to the locale of Khulshi, it has Special line of water and gas which makes uninterrupted electric and water supply. This is the key facility of this area blessed with, whether outside Khulshi as well as other parts of the city faces severe crisis. Security has got another highly frequent response from the respondent. Dwellers said they enjoy good security, and do not have any worry for theft, robbery or other misconducts. Though this area is smaller compared to surrounding area, it has nearby police station. Director General's office of police is nearby. Having diplomatic zone adjacent to residential area contributed to best security to this area. Moreover, society gates are highly protected with gatemen, and are provided with high security at night.

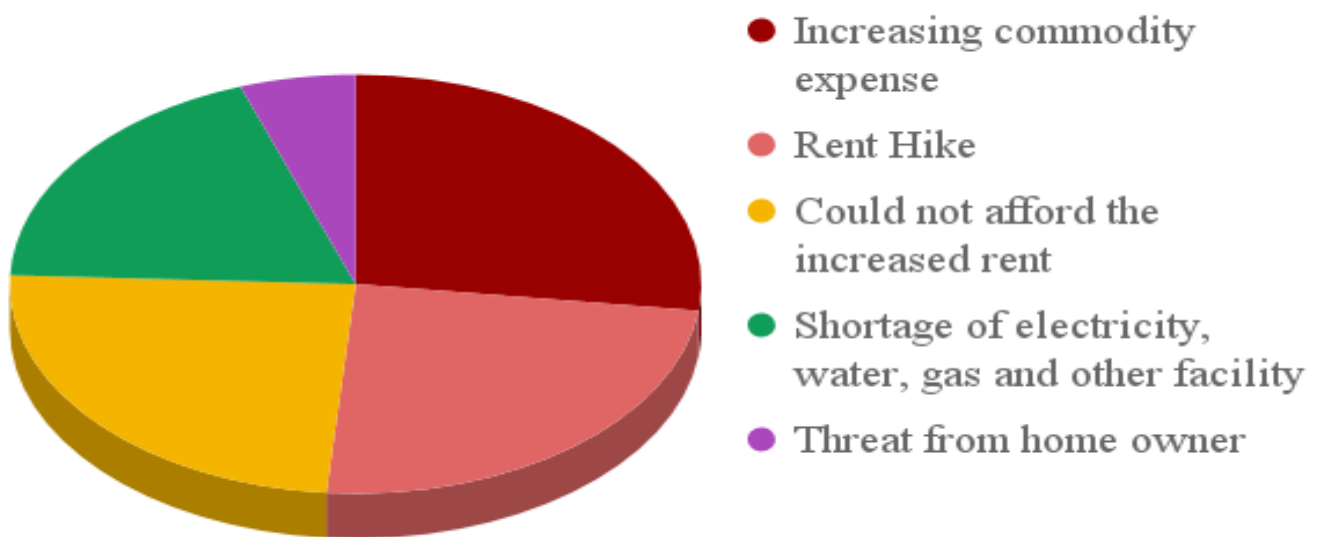
Transportation is one of the best facility in this region according to the dwellers. Most of the respondents said that roads are spacious. Has good network with main road and linking road, which makes this area free from congestion and hustle. In reality, this society has the largest and spacious roads in the city. Parking facility is provided for almost every flat.

Aesthetic issue is the crucial elements of this region. Hilly beautiful area with sophisticated buildings makes this area exceptional from other parts of the whole city. Buildings were build spacey, not in congested manner, that make the area peaceful and clean.

#### **5.2.8 Disadvantage of living in both area**

In surrounding area of Khulshi, utility services are the major disadvantages for these areas. Along with other areas of Chittagong, these areas have severe gas shortage especially in winter season. And in summer, electricity and water crisis goes highest because of unbalanced demand and supply. People raised their concern on higher rent of accommodation. They said, it goes up each year depending on house owner's choice without any discussion with tenants. Growing population rapidly and congestion is also important disadvantage in these areas.

### Problems facing by the families living outside Khulshi



*Figure 5-4: Ongoing problems facing by people of non-gentrified area (from surrounding areas of Khulshi)*

Source- Field Survey'2016-17

An important point raised by respondent that these areas social environment is not comfortable for them. These areas do not have enough public place at all, additionally, those areas are occupied by “bad boys”. The local political environment is also not supporting for the tenants. Though there are enough good school for the people of Khulshi, those are costly and inaccessible for the outside Khulshi people.

Within Khulshi R.A., most of them said flats are too costly and utility cost are higher. Transportation is also a problem; main roads are far from home and no entry for small vehicles; for example, taxi and rickshaw (3 wheeled human run vehicle). Here, everyone must have private car. Those who do not have personal vehicle, have to walk long distance for public transport. Another point is that the tenant community do not allows any small shops inside. This makes problem for short term shopping in urgent needs. Living is expensive according to couple of respondent. They said they have to pay higher utility bills are higher than other areas. Another type of disadvantage if social cost; to adjust with sophisticated people, they said, they need to spend more on daily life.

A significant portion of respondent raised that the total social environment non-inclusive and segregated. Since most of the residents belong to elite class maintain their own professional or class based network, it becomes difficult to communicate with them. Some of the respondent think that the committee of the society is not cooperative. Thus, they are not concerned on area's problems.

Social segregation is evident in the interview. One insightful point found out from some respondent that they might not get help from their neighbor when in need. In her comment- “Though I want to live with better off people, there is no hope for getting help when in need”.

### **5.2.9 Positive and negative aspects of this change that took place during their living**

“Road construction, developer-led change, new faces and new types of people”.

There remains very sharp and significant difference between observing change in both locality. Majority of the respondents outside Khulshi pointed out that they observed much changes in surrounding locality during their living. However, very few of respondent from Khulshi residential area think the area has changed a lot during their living, whether majority of them did not observe any change at all and some of them remain silent. It demonstrates that people inside Khulshi are not aware of the change.

In types of changes took place in both area, there remain, again, significant contrast between their points. Road constructions and touristic changes have been major transformation of the areas according to outside Khulshi residents. Formation of owner associations is a minor change in these areas as well. But in within Khulshi, developer-led changes and population increase with new kind of socio-economic profile have been the major changes in Khulshi area- according to the dwellers of Khulshi. They said, significant number of developers have penetrated the area in past days, small buildings are being demolished and replaced by luxurious multistoried apartments. Some pointed out that they see many Bungalows in past days which are not visible at all in recent times. Population increase is also significant. One interesting point came out that illustrates there is significant portion of increased population are new types, different socio-economic background which differs significantly from existing population.

Within Khulshi R.A., respondents raised certain points as positive aspects of the changes that took place since their living. People from different background has started to move into this area, that makes this area lively and busy, according to few respondents. Previously monotonous silence is not visible nowadays. Lots of market and commodity services have grown up for growing population. Another very important issue was pointed out from those people that this area is going to be more recognized and prestigious since other areas are deteriorating.

### **Negative aspect of this change (outside Khulshi and inside Khulshi)**

“Noitikotar Obokkhoy, Kharap Cheleder Adda” (In Bengali, **damage of public ethics and hangout of bad young folks**)

The people from surrounding area mentioned that the changes that have been going through since their living created lots of problems in their life. Pollution and congestion have become prominent in the area due to massive construction activities. People said too much sound, dust and population being created in everyday



activities makes their life miserable. These changes have created many social problems as well. The significant portion of people raised their concern that the new people doesn't care traditional ethical norms. There is another important issue came out that the hangout of bad young folks has increased nowadays which make the ordinary life uncomfortable. Eve teasing, and other crimes have been increased.

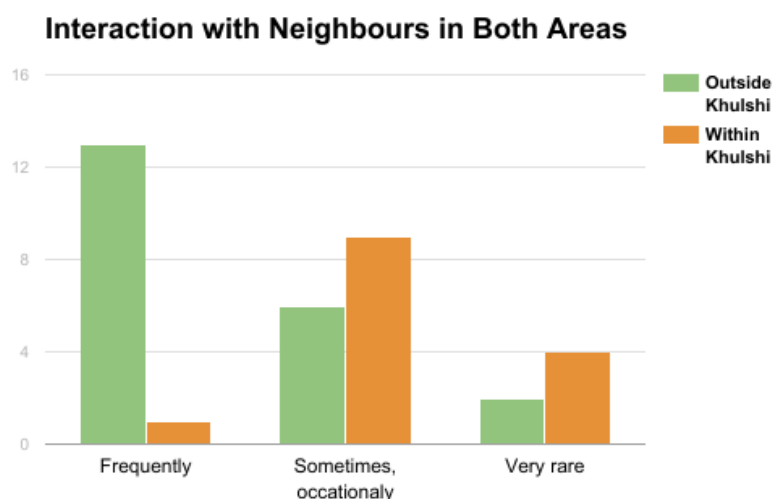
In contrast to surrounding area, the people from Khulshi are concerned on increasing population most of them are not known to them. This might create the security problem in anytime in the area. Congestion is also important negative aspect in the area. Most commonly, most of the neighbors do not know each other, and they perceive that this new kind of people makes the social life more uncomfortable.

#### **5.2.10 Eviction Issue; Numbers of Families being affected**

Two kinds of scenarios have been found in case of eviction in both the area. Most of the residents of Khulshi do not know about the eviction case, whether the similar portion of residents from outside Khulshi raised that there have been many families being evicted since their living. In Khulshi, some residents said they have observed some families left the area previously which is not eviction at all. They might have got their own home in other area.

In case of surrounding areas of Khulshi, 20 respondents out of 25 said yes to the question of eviction. However, the number varies in their counts; some says they noticed 10-11 families, some noticed 6-7 or 4-5 and so on. However, they do not know where the families live now. Certain points they have pointed out behind leaving those families; such as, rent hike, economic inefficiency to maintain the increased rent, increased commodity prices. One of the respondents noticed that there are ongoing threats come from the homeowner to either pay the increased rent or leave the area.

Additionally, it is an important issue that most of the respondent argued that their families are also going through similar kinds of problems currently. The problems are like, rent hike- which is being intentionally determined by the home owner in most of the time, increased commodity prices, and many other problems. Some predicts that many more families could have left the area sooner or later. Social Relationships, social interactions (within both areas and between them)



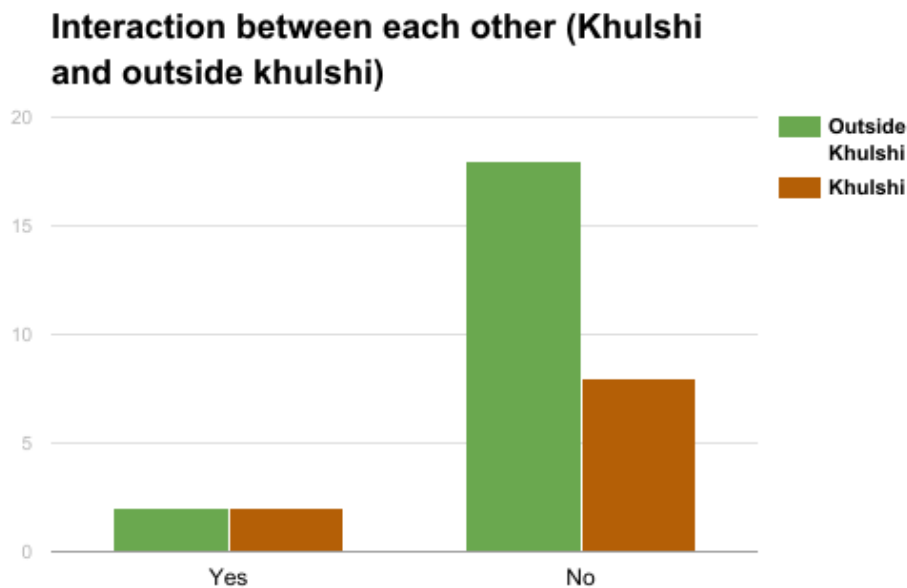
**Figure 5-5: Social interaction with the neighbors**

Source- Field Survey'2016-17

Most of the respondents living outside Khulshi said they maintain relationship with their neighbors quite often, but in Khulshi the scenario is just opposite. The surrounding area of Khulshi, neighborhood is well tied; they know each other who are living nearby.

But the case of interaction is not found significantly in Khulshi. Most of the families are living inside their enclosed walls, very seldom they communicate with their neighbors. However, there are certain type of social interaction has been found. This is based on community club and professional community.

Between the both area; Khulshi and outside Khulshi, in most cases they do not have any relation with each other. The two community are almost living in segregation.



*Figure 5-6: Social interaction with each other;between gentrifier and non-gentrifer*

Source- Field Survey'2016-17

#### **5.2.11 Interaction between the two areas: Outside Khulshi and Khulshi RA**

To both groups of respondents, it is asked that how do they view each other; for example, are they friendly, unfriendly or want to live separate than you? In response to this question, half of the respondents from Outside Khulshi said the people of Khulshi are good and behaved well. However, some of them said, they (Khulshi) do not bother to make any relation and want to live separately. Few of them confused on this question.

When it is asked to the respondent living in Khulshi area as “What is your opinion toward outside areas of this area?” most of them did not answer. However, few of them replied negatively. In their word, they see the people “Very clumsy and undisciplined”. And few of them said those areas are other sides of the roads surrounding Khulshi, that is why, good communication is not possible because of road barrier.

Before doing survey, it was assumed that some people from outside Khulshi might be working in Khulshi. This assumption came from Gulshan- most elite and expensive area in capital city Dhaka, where most of the house-worker comes from nearby slums around the area. But in survey in Khulshi, this case is totally absent.

## 6 Discussion

This research shows some key characteristics of gentrification in regarding our case study, Khulshi and its surrounding areas. The main findings of this research are -

- Movement into the study area is almost the same in both cases. Most of the residents have been living in the area not more than 10-15 years before. That indicates that this area is new-build.
- Sharp contrast in socio-economic profile between both the areas. While most of the respondents in outside Khulshi are small business or job holders, the dwellers of Khulshi are mainly high-level official, real estate businessmen and other types of high paid jobholder. Rather than parent's education, the children of Khulshi (second generation) exhibit the higher level of education. Economic disparity is very sharp between two areas.
- Imbalanced consumption and utility services in both area. Where gas and water crisis are prominent in outside, the people living inside Khulshi gets special utility connection and other services.
- Road construction is the key factor for the development of the whole area. This notion is quite common in terms of gentrification in other Asian cities. Like other Asian cities, the road and other infrastructure construction paved the way for gentrification in Chittagong. Increase of massive real estate builders and ongoing building constructions are the important characteristic in the area.
- In terms of social, economic or political, no significant connectivity between two areas have been found out. Both areas stand in segregation.
- Eviction is visible in the area. Especially from outside Khulshi, the respondents are being found more vocal on eviction issue. Majority of the respondents from outside confirmed eviction, and raised that many families left that areas in previous years.
- Both displacement and replacement of socio-economic class are going simultaneously in the area.

Those findings mentioned above indicate directly to gentrification in general, and new-build gentrification in more specific. To understand the whole process, it is needed to discuss those findings according to our research findings. Those are discussed in following discussion.

### Agents of Gentrification

Considering both mainstream gentrification theories and the case study, the certain group of people can be pointed out as the prime agents of gentrification in Bangladesh perspective. They are such as, the community with very higher socio-economic profile, real estate developer, the local land owner and the house owner, local authority, regional and international corporation, local elite population, and most importantly, the state.

According to our research questions and reviewed literature, all the findings of this research are being discussed systematically in the following chapters.

## **6.1 New build Development**

From the literature review on remote sensing change detection technique, it is seen that greater Khulshi region has developed very recently; not more than three decades before. Additionally, from the survey it is evident that most of the respondents living in both Khulshi and surrounding areas arrived there five to ten years. In that case, this area can be defined as new build urbanized area. Here, Lambert and Boddy (2002) raised question whether the sort of new housing development and conversions are in fact, still be characterized as `gentrification, post- recession or otherwise. The classical gentrification process takes place in the central areas of the city. However rather than central area of the city, this research area shows the development of the gentrified area has been taken place in the peripheral area (peripheral in the sense of previous time when gentrification has just started though it cannot be said as peripheral in contemporary sense).

So, our next objective is to find whether this development can be defined as new build gentrification. To analyze that, it needs to bring Davidson and Lees (2005, 2010)'s four premise of new build gentrification: which are- reinvestment of capital, social upgrading by an incoming middle class, landscape change and the new-build gentrifier, and displacement.

### **Capital Investment in the Study Area (Khulshi)**

Since last two decades, Khulshi area has gained huge investment from the both public and the private sector. Construction of transport infrastructure, developing utilities and other facilities has been done by government. The private investment has infiltrated through real estate, shopping complex, entertainment business and through other high-end service sectors.

Before coming private investment, public and the international establishments came there. For example, Indian High Commission, the Russian consulate, Television Bhaban (building) and some other government service centers, for example, Dampara Police Line, Weather and Earthquake Measuring Centre, Jhautala Wireless Station, Railway Workshop, Directorate of Environment, Office of National Housing Authority and other establishments were there since.

The investment pattern in the area is equated to the work of David Satterthwaite (2005), which argued that urban development in Asia is largely driven by the concentration of local, national and increasingly, international profit seeking enterprises in and around particular urban centers. Since last couple of decades, there has been huge investment took place on the area where most of the investment is mainly in real estate, luxury shopping malls, restaurants, luxurious hotels, amusement parks and other facilities.

Many new aristocratic shopping centers are visible in the area which have been come not more than two decades ago. For instance, Sanmar Ocean City, Amin center, etc. has been built in recent times. Some new amusement parks, for instance, Foy's Lake amusement park, Concord Amusement park, Water park, Railway Museum, Zoological Garden etc. has been established in previous decades. Apart from that, massive investment has been done in the real estate sector, and many more are coming in very soon.

## **6.2 Socio-economic profile: Upgrading or polarization**

Income disparity is very high between two areas, difference is around 10 times. Where monthly income is around USD 100 to 300 in outside Khulshi, Khulshi resident's monthly income ranges from USD 2000 to 4000 or more in some respect. While residents of Khulshi must pay most of their income on the social cost, where living cost is hardly affordable in outside area.

Certain factors, for instance, prestige, aesthetic value, economic capability for luxuries flats, and enclave nature of the area have influenced for choosing Khulshi area to live. However, better livelihood opportunity has become important aspect to live outside Khulshi area.

From the opinion of Khulshi residents, the major sinks of their income are lifestyle rather than basic expenditure. Though their basic expenditure is also higher than surrounding areas, they must pay a high amount of money to maintain their social status and quality life style.

The present study found out new class proposed by David Ley (1996) which contrasts with "creative class" introduced by Richard Florida (2005). The creative class has not get noticeable place in the study. However, Ley (1996) illustrates the characteristics of the new people as those without children, and replaces old families with more children. This notion is not the same in Khulshi area; residents are with two or more children, but cannot be said as not young. Perhaps, most of the household heads are over 50 years old, only those who have become capable of gaining sufficient wealth to afford their new expensive living. This newly created exclusive area is blessed with all kind of luxurious commodity and civic facility. These facilities work as a pool factor to live in this area. Their preference to live in the study area proves David Ley (1996)'s illustration that this class wants to live closer to their jobs and always look for easy access to cultural venues, entertainment options, historic architecture and other city amenities.

## **6.3 Class change and nature of incomers and characteristics of surrounding areas**

With a mix of the traditional elite, Bollywood culture and western influence, a distinct type of lifestyle has been seen, in terms of both economic, cultural and social.

Clarke, (2005: 258) viewed gentrification as 'a change in the population of landowners' where the new users are of a high socio-economic status than the previous users, together with an associated change in the built

environment through a reinvestment in fixed capital'. In the survey, it is strongly evident that landowners play the most vital part in the region. The People with lower income do not have much power to resist this influence since formal legislation does not protect their right effectively. Either those who have economic capability or have land on their possession can survive in the area.

**Both displacement and replacement of socio-economic class are going simultaneously in the area.**

Form residence history, this region (greater Khulshi) can be said as newly populated. Majority of both groups of residents moved into the area from five to ten years. A small portion of the residents in Khulshi came there 11 to 15 years before. However, very few people lived there more than 15 years in both areas. From the oral history of the respondents, it can be assumed that the incomers are not new middle class, but new wealthy and elite class. The majority of the respondents from both group came to existing area around 10 to 15 years ago.

As it is mentioned before that in gentrification research, there are two opponent groups claimed opposite outcome in terms of class change and eviction; that is, one group claimed class replacement (for instance, Chris Hamment) and other viewed as displacement (Tim Slater, for example). In this study area, the first group's claim does not evident strongly to the second. As the region is newly build, and both respondent group- the gentrifier and the gentrified' has arrived at this region one to two decades ago, the transformation of class is not possible. In other word, it cannot be said that the lower income people was being transformed into higher income and then became the gentrifier. Nevertheless, it is strongly evident that the gentrifier came from other areas, and with their economic and social power they are gentrifying the area.

**6.4 Neighborhood change; loss or up-gradation from the people's view**

Loss of neighborhood and social segregation are the most prominent characteristics in the area. According to the respondents, the people living in the gentrified area do not have any noticeable social connection with surrounding area. They are not even connected to their next-door neighbors in many respects.

From the respondent's view, the neighborhood has been changed dramatically since last couple of decades. Though most of the people living inside Khulshi area views the changes as positive in most cases, the people outside Khulshi founds significantly negative to those changes.

Development induced changes is very significant in Khulshi area. Respondents pointed out that small buildings are being replaced with multistoried apartments, and traditional old houses have not been visible in comparison with previous time. In outside Khulshi, road construction and development of transportation are very significant. This trend is quite common in other Asian cities. In many cases, gentrification starts after the construction of major roads and development of transportation.

Social segregation is one of the most important findings in this study. In Khulshi, most of the families live inside their enclosed walls; very seldom they communicate with their neighbors. However, there are certain

types of social interactions have been found in Khulshi which is based on community clubs and other professional communities. Both areas do not have any noticeable social interaction with each other. However, most of the respondents living outside Khulshi said they maintain relationship with their neighbors quite often: their neighborhood is well tied, and they know each other who lives nearby. In contrast to that in Khulshi, the scenario is just opposite. From the field study, it can be said that the study area is totally segregated from outer areas in all respect; no social mixing has been found in the study. Though both groups live in the same neighborhood, they live in segregation. No interaction between the two groups has been found.

### **6.5 Landscape Change; observation of physical change**

From the visual analysis and from the respondent's opinion, the study area has been going through rapid changes in recent times. Real estate builders or people who have either land or capital can be viewed as the major forces behind this change. This notion is similar to what Neil Smith (1987) argued. In his claim, gentrification was fueled by the profitability potential of building and real estate capital invested in inner-city areas and, following what he identified as the 'rent gap'.

Compared with Global North, McGregor (2008) stressed on apparent 'look' of the cities in Global South through certain symptoms of gentrification; such as the development of business centers, shopping malls, luxury hotels and high-rise residences, as well as the emergence of gated communities. This notion is very significant in current case study.

Working on Manila-Philippine, Choi (2014) argued that the major trend of urban change in Asian cities is the privatization of space. If we look at corporate and locally powerful group's activities in recent years, this notion is visible. We can consider illegally built BGMEA building on the watercourse of Hatirjheel canal, or conversion of Outer-stadium playground into luxurious swimming pool, it signifies privatization process in the country. The conversion of a playground is directly and forcefully done by city government can be a perfect representation of this process. In case of Shanghai (Wang, 2011), Beijing (Shin, 2009b) or Tokyo (Lu<sup>tz</sup>tzeler, 2008) it is evident that city governments have played the role of entrepreneurial promoter of inner-city redevelopment and gentrification.

### **6.6 Case of Displacement or eviction**

Slater (2009) argued that demonstrating the real number of eviction in gentrification research is not possible because of lack of statistical data. His argument is valid, because eviction is subjective in many cases. In this research, the issue of eviction is being highlighted from respondents' opinion. From the questionnaire and the in-depth interview, it is certain that both displacement and replacement are taking place simultaneously in the area, however, displacement and eviction are mostly prominent. From public opinion, the people living in



non-gentrified area are more vulnerable to future displacement and eviction. Except owner-occupied houses, most of the respondent anticipate that they should leave the area soon.

Although, most of the residents of Khulshi were silent about the case of eviction, whether most of the residents from outside Khulshi raised that there have been many families being evicted since their living. Rent hike, economic inefficiency to maintain the increased rent and increased commodity prices are the common problems in outside Khulshi area. From the respondents' opinion, it is noticed that there are ongoing threats come from the homeowner to either pay the increased rent or leave the area. It is an important issue that most of the respondent argued that their families are also going through similar kinds of problems currently. The problems are like, rent hike- which is being intentionally determined by the home owner in most of the time, increased commodity prices, and many other problems. Some predicts that many more families could have left the area sooner or later.

Here, we can bring Peter Marcuse's (1985) the conceptualization of four types of displacements again. The area exhibits third and fourth types of displacements; that is, exclusionary and displacement pressure. As the Khulshi area is already gentrified by the population of higher socio-economic capability, the existing low-income population cannot access housing any longer. If we discuss displacement pressure, it is also visible since land price and house rent is becoming higher year after year, while low income people might need to leave the area soon and need to find elsewhere to live. In general, direct last-resident's displacement (Marcuse, 1985) is visible in Bangladesh, which is manifested in slum clearance, evacuation for new build projects, the forceful displacement of marginal community –for example, sex workers, and other state led activities.

Gentrifying neighborhoods are always portrayed as being in conflict, creating tension between longer-standing residents and newly arrived gentrifiers (Lees et. al. 2008, Slater 2006, Smith 1996 cited in Doucet, 2009). From the questionnaire survey, the people living outside Khulshi area are mostly vocal in the case of eviction. They have raised the point that many families have already left the area due to many reasons; some of them left due to the threat from the landowner, some could not afford increased house rent or increased commodity price, and so on.

In all processes regarding gentrification, the state has very strong influence and acts as a primary actor. Since, powerful local and national elites and corporations have strong influence on public decision making, they are also lead actor in the gentrification process.

## 7 Conclusion

This research is an initial work on gentrification in Chittagong as well as in Bangladesh. The aim of this research was to explore and unearth basic knowledge on Bangladesh using the existing theories of gentrification. As it is an individual master's thesis without any project or funding, and no prior work was found in this case study, it was very challenging to proceed. However, this paper contributes to shifting our focus on unresearched areas using mainstream theories.

My first research question was whether the new build areas known as Khulshi and its surrounding areas can be said as new build gentrification. Connecting the basic premises set by gentrification and new-build gentrification theories with the above notions displayed by study area, it can be said that the case study area, Khulshi Residential Area, is a new-build gentrified area. In addition to this, the gentrification process is also going on around the surrounding areas as well. It can be projected that this gentrification process will surpass other area as well in the near future.

From the analysis, it is strongly evident that the case study area is facing the gentrification process rapidly. The evidence suggests that new-build gentrification is prominent in the area. The case study shows certain common characteristics of the main stream gentrification theory as well as regional similarity. Thus, certain localized characteristics are also evident.

In the theory, there is an ongoing debate on whether gentrification displacing lower income people (Slater, 2006), or it is just a replacement of socio-demographic characteristics (Hamnett, 2003). However, from the case study both issues are evident. The people living in non-gentrified area are vulnerable to displacement and eviction. Except owner-occupied houses, most of the respondent anticipate that they have to leave the area in the near future.

Rather than 'creative class' proposed by Richard Florida, the gentrifier group belongs to the 'new class' proposed by David Ley (1996). Richard Florida's 'creative class' has not been found in the case study. Here, economic capability is pivotal rather than education, profession or traditionally possessed higher social class. Ley's social class- which includes young professionals, artists and others, however, the gentrifier class of the study area strongly differs strongly from Ley's suggested class. The gentrifier groups are mainly higher business class community, employees from high-rank officials, and land owner. The case study has also shown that the gentrifier group comes from a higher age group (50+), with strong economic capability. Additionally, increase of gated community is strongly visible. Majority of this elite group belongs to the gated communities, who want to be segregated from others, yet, can enjoy a globalized lifestyle, in terms of economic and cultural.

From the experience of Global South, McGregor (2008) illustrated some key characteristics such as- the development of business centers, shopping malls, luxury hotels and high-rise residences, as well as the emergence of gated communities. He illustrated that on the surface, the 'look' of the cities in the global south seems to suggest some of the key symptoms of gentrification that have been identified in their counterparts in the Global North, with the development of business centers, shopping malls, luxury hotels and high-rise residences, as well as the emergence of gated communities. Those symptoms are available exclusively to those who can enjoy a globalized lifestyle, both economically and culturally. These notions are, therefore, strongly evident in the study as well. Social segregation is one of the most prominent characteristics in the area.

Conversion of working-class housing in the inner area into upmarket retailing and leisure hotspots rather than middle-class residence is commonly visible in Asian cities (Tran, 2015). In case of Shanghai, Shikumen clusters- dilapidated villas with elaborated facades built in the early 20th century converted into the trendy catering outlets and international retail brands (He and Wu, 2005) can be an example. Same process is seen if we consider Fays lake amusement park, ongoing project of Khulshi club and other luxurious establishment in the area. Rather than block by block change that takes place in western cities, large and rapid transformation happens in Asian cities according to Tran (2015). Similar notion is visible in Bangladesh and in the case study area of Chittagong. State and private sector have key role in that transformation.

Both state and private sector working jointly in gentrification process. According to the respondent from the both gentrifier and gentrified group, road construction and developer-led establishments are the major changes that took place in recent times. Here, road constructions are done by state which paves the way for gentrification, then real-estate builders and other private actor come into the area. Where gentrified area (Khulshi) gets special services of utility from the city authority, non-gentrifying areas face severe shortage of those services.

Like Asian cities, the privatization of space Choi (2014) is evident in Bangladesh. The case of outer stadium playground beside Khulshi- which is now being transformed into swimming pool for the rich population can be a proper representation of this issue. Generally, privatization process is alarmingly taken place in urban places in the country.

Segregation is the one of the common feature in the area. Both social and economic segregation are visible between gentrified and non-gentrified areas. However, since this research is the initial study in Bangladesh perspective, further in-depth study is required.

In southern experience, government laid down the foundation of gentrification, then private investment take place. This notion is clearly evident in the case area. Private investor took the advantage provided by public infrastructures. Then, more private friendly public policy has been taken since private authority has strong influence on government.

The limitation of this paper is that it could not bring in depth and critical study on this process in Bangladesh, due to shortage of time, scope as well as funding, since it was a part of self-funded master's thesis. Subsequently it is the initial work of gentrification in case of Bangladesh, prime objective of this work was to highlight general outlook of gentrification, with major focus in new-build gentrification. From all the results and discussion came out in the study strongly designate the existence of both types in Bangladesh. This research indicates that there is a massive scope of research on this topic, thus, suggests to more research to conduct.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that the issue of gentrification is totally absent in academic literature or any other written form in the region. This might have paved the way toward further gentrification what is seen in Bernt and Hold (2009)'s (Bernt, 2009) paper. In case of Berlin-Prenzlauer Berg- where in absence of academic debate on gentrification, policy makers use as justification for further market intervention. It is alarming that same process might work in southern cities if not given proper attention. So, it is very crucial to focus gentrification research on this region from a critical perspective.

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## Appendices

The types of questionnaire have been designed for two group; questionnaire for People living in Khulshi RA and questionnaire for People living in Outside area of Khulshi.

### 1. Questionnaire for People Living in Khulshi RA

**Note:** *This interview is the part of a research on housing affordability and neighborhood issues. All information will be kept confidentially and anonymously. And all this information will be removed after conducting Research.*

(Instructions for surveyor: Explain the questions in your own word. And importantly let the respondent speak until it goes beyond the topic.)

#### First part: Perception on this Locality

Why do you choose to live in this this area?

Answer:

What is the advantages and disadvantages of the area to live?

Advantages of this area

- 1.
- 2
- 3.
- 4.

Disadvantages of this area

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Do you perceive any changes of neighborhood?

Answer:

What kind of? (For example, new buildings, transportation...)

Answer:

Positive aspects of these changes

Answer:

Negative aspects of these changes

Answer:

How do you perceive your neighbors? Do you join them in family or community occasions?

Answer:

Does any of your relative lives adjacent to this area? (for example, Jhautola slum, Railway colony.... etc.)?

How do you think about the adjacent areas and the people living there?

Answer:

### **Second Part: Time frame of Movement into the current area**

When did you moved into this area: (to get the time frame of starting the gentrification process)

From your birth? Yes    No

Time or year:

When your Family Started to live permanently in the city (from village)?

Answer:

Your previous locations in this city

### **Third Part: Eviction Related**

Do you know any family moved from this area because of rent price hike, eviction, or any other reason?

Answer:

How many families? Answer:

Why:

Do you have any idea where do they live now?

Do you face any problem listed below-?

- Rent hike
- Can't afford increasing housing rent
- Price hike of everyday consumed goods
- Inaccessibility of Sanitation, Medication or any other utilities
- Threat of eviction from the owner or any other?

Answer:

Do you think your family could be evicted from here? (Fear of eviction as Bernt and Holm, 2009 said)

Answer: No..... Yes.....

If yes, How?

(Let him or her tell more)

#### **Fourth Part: Family Status, Profession and Education**

Family Related Information (all information will be kept confidentially and anonymously. And all this information will be removed after conducting Research)

Name

Phone Number (for further information if necessary):

Household type: Owned      Rented      other: (what?)

Number of family member (this to identify the family structure whether it is nuclear or joint family)



**Profession and Educational Status** (to identify social profile of the target group).

Please include all adult people living in this house

Relations	Professions and working status	Education
You		
Your spouse		
Father (if currently live here)		

Optional Question: Can you give us a rough estimation of your household's average monthly income?  
(Approximate range is enough)

Box to be filled by Surveyor just after the survey being conducted

Household type: Dual housing, multistoried apartment....

Average Monthly income:

Approximate Age:

Any Oother thing if comes to your mind

**Thanks for your kind cooperation**

*Research Conductor: Muhammad Sajjadur Rahman*

*Master's student of Urban Geography*

*University of Helsinki, Finland*

## 2. Questionnaire for people Not-living in Khulshi RA but in adjacent areas

In the second part of the questionnaire will be done on the people not living in Khulshi residential area but in surrounding and adjacent areas within Khulshi Thana. After conducting the both surveys, profile of those two group will be matched.

### **Questionnaire**

**Note:** This interview is the part of a research on housing affordability and neighborhood issues. All information will be kept confidentially and anonymously. And all this information will be removed after conducting Research.

### **First part: Perception on this Locality**

Why do you chose to live in this this area: (this question is aimed to examined what Ley(1996) explained as supply side theory whether higher middle class people intentionally chose certain area)

Answer:

When did you (your family) moved into this area: (to understand the time frame of gentrification process)

From your birth? Yes     No

Time or year:

What is the advantages and disadvantages of the area to live?

Advantages of this area

- 1.
- 2
- 3.
- 4.

Disadvantages of this area

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Do you perceive any changes of neighborhood?

Answer:

What kind of? (for example, new buildings, transportation...)

Positive aspects of these changes

Answer:

Negative aspects of these changes

Answer:

How do you perceive your neighbors? Do you join them in family or community occasions?

Do you have any relative living in Khulshi R&A?

Answer: No      Yes: (Who)

How do you see people living Khulshi RA area?

(Like, are they friendly, unfriendly or want to live separate than you?

If you work in Khulshi RA, what sort of work do you do there?

(Many residents of Khulshi RA take household workers who come from adjacent areas)

## **Second Part: Eviction Related**

Do you know any family moved from this area because of rent price hike, eviction, or any other reason?

How many families?

Why:

Do you have any idea where do they live now?

Do you face any problem listed below-?

Rent hike

Can't afford increasing housing rent

Price hike of everyday consumed goods

Inaccessibility of Sanitation, Medication or any other utilities

Threat of eviction from the owner or any other?

Do you think your family could be evicted from here? (Fear of eviction as Bernt and Holm 2009 said)

Answer: No..... Yes.....

If yes, How?

(Let him or her tell more)

## **Second Part: Time frame of Movement**

When did you moved into this area: (to get the time frame of gentrification process)

From your birth? Yes      No

Time or year:

When your Family Started to live permanently in the city (from village)? (Similar to previous question, this aimed to get the time frame of gentrification process)

Your previous locations in this city

Where you raised in- Town or Village

Answer:

When your Family Started to live permanently in the city (from village)?

From your birth

Time or year:

Detail of You and your Family

#### Fourth part: Family Status, Profession and Education

**Family Related Information (all information will be kept confidentially and anonymously. And all this information will be removed after conducting Research)**

Name  Phone Number (for further information if necessary)

Number of family member (to identify the family structure whether it is nuclear or joint family)

Household type: Owned ☐ Rented ☐ other: (what)

**Profession and Educational Status** (to identify social profile of the target group)

Please include all adult people living in this house

Relations	Professions and working status	Education
You		
Your spouse		
Father (if currently live here)		

Optional Question: Can you give us a rough estimation of your household's average monthly income?  
(Approximate range is enough)

Box to be filled by Surveyor just after the survey being conducted

Household type: Pucca, Semi-pucca, Jhupri (slum), or other...

Average Monthly income:

Approximate Age:

**Thanks for your kind cooperation**

*Research Conductor: Muhammad Sajjadur Rahman*

*Master's student of Urban Geography*

*University of Helsinki, Finland*